THE WORLD TURNS LEFT

by

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O, Peuple, nous t'aimons immensément :
N'es-tu pas donc la pauvre âme ignorante,
En proie à tout ce qui sait et qui ment ?
N'es-tu donc pas l'immensité souffrante ?

(*Verlaine*).

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Author's Preface

I.

AMONG THE WAR AIMS.

AT the time of writing the war is reaching what may be called its "1918 phase." At this stage the public, having been promised blood and tears, toil and sweat, and having seen that promise abundantly fulfilled, now, with victory in sight, demands from its leaders further and better prognostications. Now they want beer and skittles.

That they will receive assurances of this type is politically probable. That these assurances—or Insurances—will be implemented is politically less probable. That people will be disappointed, some with the promise, others with the performance, is psychologically certain. But with the reliability of political utterances this work is not seriously concerned. The important fact, from the author's standpoint, is the universal expectation and prevalence of programmes of a highly socialistic character. The currency of Utopia is stronger than it ever was on the political market; and there is reason to believe that it is well backed.

It is this currency, and the manifold tendencies favouring its present circulation, that are the subject matter of this essay. There is a tendency in the world to the kind of planning and social organization that was once called Utopian. Not only is the spiritual, or material, need for this more manifest now; but changes in the behaviour of people, and an immense development

of machinery, including social machinery, have provided the world with a large part of the technical equipment that is required in order to run a Utopia. The trend is therefore much more practical, much less theoretical, now than when the social purpose was confined to the minds of philosophers. Plato had no experience of the civil service; and the civil service of the modern Republic is not Platonic.

The War Aims—or Peace Aims—that are being stated to-day may be vague, but they are considerably more concrete than the schemes of Plato, More or Bacon. Nevertheless we shall be concerned, in considering them, with the intellectual developments that they express, and with what the man in the street would call abstract ideas. Abstract ideas, which are pure speculation at one period, seem to become questions of great practicality in another age. To-day we are no longer interested in the battle that was joined when Greek met Greek and fought for an iota in a theological text. But we, on the other hand, show interest in abstractions of physical and economic theory that the fathers of the Church might have found it difficult to follow. In politics we have not yet arrived at the stage (which a certain Oxford undergraduate once predicted) when democratic elections may be fought on the issue of Determinism or Free Will, as elections were in the smaller circles of the medieval world. But important recent elections have been fought on highly abstruse theories of wealth. And nowadays there are questions at issue between Individualists and Socialists, between the social sects themselves, between the advocates of Socialism, and the dangerously similar and plausible organizers of Fascism, which require subtle, highly discursive thinking to resolve. Modern economism and Dialectical Materialism are metaphysics, but they are theories for which the time is ripe, and they have influenced the life of the twentieth century quite as strongly as the refinements of Calvinism influenced the seventeenth century.

The author, therefore, makes very little apology for assuming that the public is interested, has to be interested, in some quite difficult lines of relatively abstract thought. If these are potent

enough to influence, for good and ill, the history of a generation, they should be strong enough to arouse the interest of the average reader. The author assumes, moreover, in his readers, at least a nodding acquaintance—that is, a knowledge by imperfect description—with many of the names, the words, the thoughts and the movements that have loomed large in modern thinking, and that have been so influential in modern political practice—and malpractice.

Further, the author has not deemed it necessary or desirable to attempt the works of explanation and introduction that have been so admirably done in England by many writers of distinction. Between them the Webbs, Dr. Lindsay, Professor Hobson, Professor Laski, Mr. Cole and Mr. Berlin, to name a few, have opened to English readers most of the paths that lead to a good understanding of Socialism, Communism, and cognate systems of thought. The present essay involves no pretensions to authority in these difficult fields. Its purpose is rather to underline some truths and some criticisms, and to show their place and their value in a world embarrassed by its intellectual wealth, and obsessed by its material poverty.

If there is novelty here, it consists in the emphasis which the author lays on the psychology of modern society, on behaviour which is, in some measure, intellectually influenced, but which is not predictable along intellectual lines. Modern political theories seem either to underestimate the human being or to overestimate him. Either ideas are irrelevant to his future, or they completely determine it. Both attitudes are ultimately wrong, because they disregard either the habit system (including the technical background of politics), or overlook the fact that this is always changing through intellectual causes. If the author has succeeded in describing contemporary conditions so as to include the misadventures of ideas as they drift into acceptance, he will have succeeded at least in dissipating some pessimism: also some of the intellectual confidence that is at once so dangerous and so admirable in the protagonists of modern progress.

II.

FAREWELL TO THE COMINTERN.

THE dissolution of the Comintern, announced from Moscow while this essay was in the press, marks the end of an epoch, and, incidentally, confirms the author's belief, elaborated in these pages, that the Communist tendency in society has developed beyond, and left behind it, many of its doctrinal and revolutionary forms.

The Comintern was a revolutionary threat hurled, not without justification, at the custodians and beneficiaries of a reactionary society at a time when reaction was in the ascendant. It was a fist shaken menacingly (or despairingly) against the hidebound West. For years this fist was thought by the world to be a Russian fist. But that was not a true belief, though there was truth in it. The government of Russia has been at all material times government by a few, though we now have reason to accept the Russian statement that those few expressed the full interest of the Russian many. The Russian oligarchy was, further, recruited in fact, though not of necessity, from a group of men who constituted the leaders of the Russian Communist Party, just as, under more constitutional forms, British Cabinets have coincided in personnel with a small galaxy of Party celestials who happened to be the most ponderous, though far from the brightest, of political luminaries.

Less constitutionally perhaps, or with less formality, a few Russian Communists ruled Russia. Stalin, be it remembered, held, until recently, only one office in the Russian political system. He was Secretary of the Communist Party. The Russian Communist Party, in turn, was affiliated to, and dominant in, the organisation that was the Comintern. Thus it was possible, in theory at least, for Russian politics to coincide with Comintern policy, just as it was possible for British policy to coincide with

the machinations of any international intriguers who were strong enough to dominate badly organized societies across the borders of nations.

In a sense, then, the existence of the Comintern was justified, but the War has shown it to be, or has made it, an anachronism. The Russian Government had already shown its lack of confidence in the International Revolution, the International Class War, by concentrating on the development of a new Russian nationalism, as well as by a diplomatic process of exploration which carried Russian allegiance from the unsatisfactory League of Nations to the treacherous borders of the Anti-Comintern.

The War that began in June, 1941, sounded the death knell of the Comintern, and at the same time gave a new, and on the Russian side an entirely beneficent, inspiration to Nationalism. The War showed also the continued importance and the long concealed merits of the national feelings and traditions of the other nations aligned against the Axis. These traditions have shown themselves greater than economic interests, and greater than the class struggle. Along the lines of Nationalism there has developed, since 1939, a political ethic. By this development the Comintern was rendered inept to society, because it was now clear that the Fascist International was destined not to become a reality. In England, at least, the political factions found themselves still able to think nationally and humanely. On the Russian side, Communism could no longer be neutral to Democracy. In the circumstances the dissolution of the Comintern may be regarded as a Russian gesture, not to the nations at large, but to the United Nations; not a peace offer, but a declaration of respect for the national identities of Russia's Allies; perhaps a handshake offered to America; and in any event a mark of greater strength of mind than was shown when, in 1941, the official entertainers of the British public found their musicians incapable of rendering the Russian National (or International) Anthem.

Apart from diplomacy the dissolution of the Comintern is logical and appropriate now, because, in the War effort of the United Nations, a high degree of Communism has become a

reality without the mediation of the class war. The proletariat has achieved a recognition of its importance in the world without invoking the arbitrament of revolution. In recognizing this the Russians, and other members of the Comintern, have recognized the theory that underlies all Western reform. Traditionally the British classes have always fought, not on a class battle-ground, but in an endeavour to wrest, from whatever opposition there was, an admission that the demands in question were ethical demands common to all classes. If on occasion the bitterness of the Poor Law or of the Means Test has crystallized more personal antagonisms, Providence has usually sent an enemy, a Spanish Armada or a Luftwaffe, to unite the combatants before the struggle became too desperate.

Further, from the British point of view, the Comintern has become an anachronism because so many of its purposes have been fulfilled, and because its major principles have become absorbed into the postulates of politics. There is no need now for fists to be shaken against the Capitalist West. But let it not be thought, by reason of these things, that the process of social evolution is over, or even settled into an harmonious pattern. We have yet to see the behaviour of the Western world when the impulse and the excitements of war have died down, and when the world has resumed, in some degree, the routine which is called Peace. It remains to be seen whether, in those conditions, the present acceptance of large and humane social purposes continues paramount and permanent.

We have yet to see, when international planning and pooling come to be tested by the grim tests of Peace, how those powerful individuals will react who see their own immediate interests suffering, and who see more hope for themselves in that unnatural and unnational nationalism which preserves large individual interests under the shield which is Protection and in the fortress that is Isolation. Then, not in England perhaps, but in places of no less importance, reactions may set in which may well cause men to say that the International Class War was buried before it was dead.

Foreword

END OF MISUNDERSTANDING.

" *War is the Father of All Things* " (Heraclitus).

IN the development and realization of the ideas that are here discussed this war is the most important moment.

That a social logic was too empty, that social forces were too blind, to create a harmonious world, purposely or by accident, is sufficiently proved by the fact that twenty years of collectivism and economism—of Socialism in fact—have not prevented, appear, indeed, to have fostered, bitter antagonisms that can only be solved by, and a psychology that can only be eradicated by, War.

This war, now that we are in it, is, we realize, an ampler use of the technique of Socialism ; and, on our part, the harnessing of that technique to a better spirit than animated the vaunted idealism of the years of peace. The war has eliminated pacifism from Socialism, restored a belief in Free Will in the place of Determinism, and given a new importance to individuality and individual belief.

The war is Socialistic in method, and more social as an effort than any other recorded effort, with the possible exception of the Russian Revolution. But the whole course of the war, its antecedent history, and the evolving plans of the protagonists, reveal the need for restating the Socialist formula in ampler terms.

In the first place, the war, when viewed in whatever perspective can as yet be achieved, is not likely to be deduced by any

responsible theorist from the clash of Capitalist interests.

That faithful fallacy, camp follower to the economic interpretation of politics for a generation, served the Dictator of Germany well in his diplomatic manoeuvrings against the more gullible elements in Europe. Indeed, that Communist doctrine served him better than the Russo-German pact itself!

Yet, if truth be told, this war comes at the end of a period in which the average conditions of living have been higher than ever before, in which the State has been more active and more conscious of its social purpose than ever before, in which the franchise has been wider, the bread cheaper, and the circuses more amusing.

During those years the Capitalist was the pacifist, because he had so much to lose in war—and the Socialist was only a pacifist because his economism was animated by the released forces of a suppressed profit motive. Certainly it is a remarkable fact that the nations with the greatest social consciousness (good or bad) have fought this war best. One is reminded of the Prussian War Lord who complained in 1911 that the private interests of "capital" were intent on preventing that highest fulfilment of the German national destiny, which is military aggression. One is reminded, also, of the untrustworthy steel-trusts—and of Henry Ford.

The Socialist must recognize that in an articulated collectivist society, there can be forces as vicious as any in Capitalism and desperately more efficient. This is one instance of the truth, which will be analysed hereinafter, that Socialism, good as it is, creates psychological problems for the world—and does not solve them by formula.

From the good socialistic standpoint this present war in its defensive aspect has been no unmitigated evil. So far from destroying civilization this war has in some measure revived it, and has, further, articulated new forces in society, forces which are the unexpressed power of the masses, and which will inevitably mould political institutions so as to give better expression to that which is fundamental in politics.

In general the proposition may be reasonably advanced that defensive wars show reformative results. The Napoleonic wars ultimately liberalized Europe, demonstrated the necessity for Democratic responsibility. The war of 1870 in its defensive aspect inspired the socialization of France; and the war of 1914 socialized England. This present war is Communizing England, and with it the rest of Europe, if not of the world. And, certainly, there is no municipal plan in existence, whether four year plan, or five year plan, or ten year plan, which can compare with the controlled economy which is the British war effort, however inadequate. And there is no precedent in history for the international pooling of resources for the protection of society, and the infinite possibilities of international effort for its better preservation. To these salutary practices, schemes are being drafted and added from day to day, which carry the intellectual authority of great names—Keynes, Morgenthau, Beveridge. These do not exhaust Socialist ideals. But at least they offer to the opposition an acceptable (and not bad) compromise, which being accepted will constitute a significant stage in world development.

Finally, accidentally, and yet according to a dimly perceptible pattern in history, this war involves a great reconciliation; a reconciliation between two Societies, moving each along its own path, one empirically, the other dogmatically, to a more social purpose than we knew in the past. This war, if it has done nothing else, has reconciled England and Russia. The forces of dissension are still operative between them. There are not wanting British cynics who see in the German-Russian war a desirable blood-letting suffered by the apoplectic and the blood-thirsty alike. "They keep on cheering," as a famous journalist put it, "hoping for both sides to lose." But in the general, if not among the Generals, there is an end of misunderstanding—and a generation of sympathy. If any such analysis of underlying ideas as is here presented helps any reader to enter into that sympathy, this, too, the author submits, is a possible justification for his work.

II.

Because of the various events of the war, Communism is no longer blindly accepted as a religion nor blindly execrated as if it were a form of black magic. The word " Communism " no longer seems to imply a communion ; and the similarity of the word Bolshevism to the Russian word for witchcraft is known to be a philological coincidence.

Now we realize that, in order to be understood, Communism, or any ism, must be objectively studied and described, as a doctrine or as a tendency, without reference to any proselytizing purpose manifested by its exponents. Precisely because it has been preached as a religion, and condemned as a heresy, the political scientist must adopt towards the new cult an attitude of ethical neutrality. This is not to say that, in one's own politics, one should adopt towards any political programme the attitude of unethical neutrality that has been adopted in recent decades to the most admittedly vicious of political tendencies. But while a movement is being studied as a political fact, rather than resisted as a political claim, the proper approach is judicial and dispassionate. Once that approach is adopted, ancient hostilities based on misunderstanding will disappear. To understand is not necessarily to forgive. But in the past many wrong condemnations have been made for want of understanding ; and want of understanding has also conditioned some unwise and uncritical acceptances of faith.

Thus, during the last quarter of a century, a period in which economic theories seemed to arouse the enthusiasms, and inspire the anathemas, that were once reserved for creeds, Communism has either been worshipped or abhorred. Its revolutionary atmosphere in history, its bloodshot mists, have distracted attention from its truth and its errors, just as they concealed from Englishmen, over a century ago, the realities and unrealities of the French Revolution. Neither the Conservatives nor the Radicals of either period gave to what faced them the dispassionate consideration and analysis to which any political or economic doctrine is entitled

on the part of those who control the destinies of nations. The direct and indirect consequences of that uncritical attitude was, in each case, eventually war. And the loss of perspective in each case proved disastrous.

Because history never repeats itself except allusively, we are not now at war with Russia as once we were with Revolutionary France. (In each period, it may be said, the Revolution that we eventually resisted was a vicious and reactionary one). But we strove hard enough for a political alignment against Russia as once against France. And the Russophils among us were also too partisan to see things in a proper political plane. An opposition that opposes from ground which is not partly common ground is either revolutionary or ineffective. The British Parliamentary opposition was desperately unrevolutionary; yet was sufficiently unrealistic not to be able to restore to the balance of politics its critical fulcrum.

Thus it came about that during two decades Communism was not seen in its proper proportion; and, because of this failure in political percipience the world plunged wildly between the poles of vague uncritical idealism and narrow over-realistic conservatism. On the one hand, the realists, the people who do not see the wood for the trees, lived in terror of the dangers that they thought lurked for them in Russian forests. Because of their fears, they reverted to that West-European hostility to Russia which dates from the Imperialistic nineteenth century. Then India was a treasure hidden and jealously guarded—not a white elephant to be presented to whomsoever it made envious. The Moujik was our enemy, the corrupt Sultan was our friend. For decades, notwithstanding a change in the notion of Empire and a period of Entente if not Alliance, that attitude persisted.

The proper balance of power, which was only achieved in 1914 (and was successful then), that salutary alignment of the under-populated East and West of Europe against the over-populated and aggressive central powers, that balance of forces which alone is calculated to preserve the European system from anarchy, was abandoned and destroyed. Worse, there emerged instead of it

a false balance of power rationalized by a false economic formula (a Communist formula invoked against Communism !), and expressing the resolution to build up the centre of Europe against the East—to make Germany the bastion of so-called Western Civilization against the danger to its institutions which appeared to be lowering in the East. " Light from the Orient " was no longer accepted teaching among the heirs of the Roman Empire. It has been doubted whether the sun of civilization rises in the East ; but it has certainly been proved true in our time that night sets in from the West.

On the other hand, those who saw, or thought they saw, the light, appeared to be blinded by it. The world was suffused with a new glory. " Bliss it was that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven." The " young men who dreamed dreams " in those days were not so practical as the experienced Russian Revolutionaries who inspired them. In the wilds of politics and human nature the latter were expert foresters ; but the former could not see the trees for the wood. Communism was a panacea, a cure for all ills, the elixir of economic life, the philosopher's stone of politics. In particular, the economic interpretation of history (thought about by Socialists, acted upon by Conservatives !) impressed the somewhat academic Russophils so much that they let it direct their judgment away from the political facts. To them nations meant nothing and military history meant less. An inexorable tendency to class-warfare made political militarism seem unimportant by contrast—an epiphenomenon in a different struggle, a deeper moving process, the emergence of harmony from discord with the inevitability of gradualness.

Hence (in England—happily not in Russia) twenty years of disarmament, an economically irrational and politically irresponsible undertaking, which appealed as much to those who were anxious to emancipate themselves from the burdens of taxation as to those who wished to emancipate themselves economically by a different use of the proceeds of taxation. Add the fact that English Conservatives are inveterately addicted to the acquisition

of their opponent's ideas ; and the stage is set for compromise—which is usually wrong ! Hence, from both sides, a complex of tendencies to a materialistic equilibrium ; to materialism in general ; to the equation of all political and moral questions with economic questions ; in particular, to the defensive materialism of the isolationist ; to the academic materialism of those who conceived politics as the unfolding of the purposes of the masses which are the raw material of politics ; and, finally, to the materialism and cynicism into which even idealists fall when they find that their " vaulting ambition o'er leaps itself and falls on t'other."

Came Economism and the handing over of political problems by idealists to cynics. " Then to be young was to be full of sorrow and leaden eyed despair." That was the mental atmosphere of frustration and regimentation which made possible the reversion of some of the most civilized elements in Europe to primitive type ; the cause of the vicious exhibitionism that sent a jack-booted generation goose-stepping to glory. Communism as cult, and Communism as superstition, were part of the intellectual confusion. At the same time, unnoticed by the majority, Communism in its only important form, Communism as practical politics, was in the ascendant. That Germany used Communism at once as an object of Crusade and as a crusading technique is history. That France used Communism as a misdirection of effort and expenditure is tragedy. England, for her part, was, quite unconsciously, becoming Communistic at a time when Russia was experimenting with the varieties of Capitalism. England, " petty bourgeois " shopkeeping nation, has, we shall see, been behaving communistically for years without thinking so, just as Moliere's " bourgeois gentil-homme " had spoken prose all his life without knowing it.

This is no greater paradox than that the Russians should realize the acuteness of the problems of capitalism in their own country ; no more paradoxical, certainly, than the temporary alignment of Russia with the crooked Crusaders of the anti-Comintern. The fact is that the problems of politics and

economics are not so readily susceptible to solution by formula and classification as stupid men, and over-intelligent men, appear to think. The practical problems which make themselves felt in time of war reveal this abundantly. Certain it is, now, that the problems that the Russians face in Russia are not radically different from those that have faced the British in Britain. It should not be a surprise to the British to learn that the Russian is a simple patriot defending his native soil. Only to the loud voiced and supercilious, only to the practitioners of high politics and money-lending, only to the high livers and low thinkers of the world, could that be a novelty or a revelation. Nor must the admirers of Russia forget that triumphs of organization and communal spirit have been possible in the West, and that Russia owes much to the physical and spiritual resources of that country which a great American President has called " Invincible England."

So far as the British themselves are concerned, the best of them—that is to say most of them—realize now that much of Russian life is wholly admirable. There is an end to hostility and an end to ridicule. More than a decade of the One Party State has left us with no feeling of superiority over the denizens of the vast land ruled by the Communist Party The childlike reliance of a large populace on that party is primitive according to our standards, but it connotes also the existence of a faith which seems to have been a good faith. Consequently there is no mirth now at the expense of the Hammer and Sickle. Humourless instruments these may be, but they are symbols of parts of the world where humour, the ability to lose gracefully, has been a luxury that could not be afforded. Rather people needed there the cold kind of efficiency that characterizes the Americans. This they have achieved. But the dull uniformities of Stakonovite machine men seem now to be varied with a glory that did not suffuse the gaping monotony of standard pattern faces which was, until 1940, England.

Now, so far as British opinion is concerned, the contemporary danger is that, animated by a natural admiration for the indomitable spirit of the Russian armies, the British people will read into

Russian Communism virtues that belong more properly to the Russian people; that they will see in the Russian example a plausible solution for their present discontents. Already there is manifest, even among the reactionary, a willingness to confess the failure of Capitalism as surprising as their erstwhile devotion to that difficult system. They may be right, or they may be wrong. The important fact, at the moment, is that they are uncritical. Whether one is a Communist or a Capitalist, one does no service to the cause of Communism or Capitalism (if economic systems may be described as causes) by uncritical acceptance of one, or by uncritical rejection of the other. Let people first try to learn what Communism is (and incidentally, what Capitalism is) before embarking on extravagant schemes, or on extravagant praises and condemnations. In the analysis of Communism they may find that they are dealing with notions which are at once less strange as economic realities than they appear, and more difficult.

It has been claimed for Communism, alternatively, that it is good, and that it is inevitable. In these days, when science is less dogmatic than ever before, few will argue for inevitability. There is a tendency in the world to Communism—perhaps an irreversible tendency—but not a necessary one. To stand in fear of it and endeavour to prevent it by propaganda incantations is to revert to the level of superstition and magic. To preach the advent of a new order, of necessity, and yet to urge its passionate adoption, is to recapture the mentality that prevailed during wars of religion and to harness it to a less worthy cause.

Adopting, on the other hand, the assumption that the Communist System is a matter of choice, since it recognises individual values, as Nazism does not, we are bound in consequence to consider it dispassionately for its political, social, and economic merits and defects. Then it will appear that Russia, and in a lesser degree, England, owe much to Communism (or to advanced Socialism) including some difficult problems of its own creation. The problems of Communism consist, like the problems of modern Capitalism, in the statement and solution of more complex and difficult economic, social, or political situations

than the pre-Socialist world admitted. In order to appreciate the specifically Communist solution, it is necessary to find the primary values and content of the new system. At a glance, its constituents appear to be simple, yet not too simple to be misunderstood. They may be said to correspond to fairly elementary constituents in human psychology. (Elementary—that is not to say crude). Because these elements are important, and are, in modern times, articulating themselves, we find that Communism is physically, if not morally, supported by the all but inevitable manifestation of human purposes which it appears to fulfil.

Many tendencies there are in modern times to Communism; vast increases in population and in the means of expressing and satisfying popular needs; great enterprises involving masses of people as producers and consumers; economism in politics—with it, egalitarianism in human taste and capacity; and, by reason of these things, a modern, and better, and stronger, repetition of ideals which have seemed in the past to flow over the world tidally, recede, and flow again. With the aid of modern technique Idealism has become at once more practical and more capable of practical fulfilment. Old obsessions are losing their hold on Society. Their disappearance threatens consequences which are chaotic if they are not controlled. Of impending chaos, Nazism is an exploitation, Communism purports to be a cosmic ordering. In support of its aims, Communism cannot appeal logically to inevitable processes—for that would deprive it of its claim to ethical, rather than physical, validity. But it can point, as any living ethical system must point, to those recognisably human purposes to which it is dedicated. Inasmuch as there is an historic tendency for these purposes to be fulfilled, Communism has the moral support of history. And in modern times, particularly, we are witnessing changes which tend in the relevant direction. Whether by a shift in the gulf stream, or a sliding of the polar surfaces, it happens that there is an approximation between the West (at least Western Europe) and the East. It appears that the world is moving towards, rather than away from, the Russian ideal and the Russian way of life. Both in the Fascist countries and in

the Democracies, the communal purpose manifests itself so clearly as to appear permanent. And aided by the acceleration given to it by military enterprise, the world order (seen through that aspect which is England) appears to be turning left.

PART I.

EVOLUTION OF A WORD

CHAPTER I.

OLD WORD — NEW MEANING.

THERE appears to be a clear movement in world history in the direction which is conventionally described as Communism. When people speak of the processes that have changed the primitive world of, say, the thirteenth century into the more sophisticated twentieth, and call it progress, they usually have in mind that themselves are more articulate, and better expressed, in modern institutions than were their progenitors in the old. Recognisably a tendency has been manifest through modern generations whereby the forms of old authority tend to become, or give place to, the functions of popular life. Even institutions which appear now to be the acme of the tyrannic, even such an institution as the modern state, was conceived as, or has become, more expressive of the people that it dominates, than were the serf-exploiting, feudal structures which it replaced. The modern state taxes more, conscripts more controls more; but it feeds, it educates, it amuses, it protects. The despots of modern times, whether benevolent or malevolent, seem to have found their expression in what they thought or said was the welfare of the people they exploited. Professional politicians need people to organize. And these, the raw material of politics, have progressively become the subject of authority where once they were the object.

But this, the process of articulating popular needs, and the related process which has increased the material benefits of popular life, took many centuries to make itself manifest. During that time, there has been a gradual heightening of the consciousness of conflict between the rulers and the ruled. The nearer man has

approached towards the ideal of liberty, the more he has been conscious of oppression. It follows that intellectual demands for the varieties of freedom and equality have become progressively clearer and louder as these ideals have loomed nearer in attainment. Such demands as are implicit in Communism, or were implicit in Chartism, have become better defined as they have become more practical. In turn, libertarianism, egalitarianism, and the form of both which is Communism, have passed from the context of theology into the affairs of everyday life. From ethics they have become politics.

Ancillary to, and conditioning, the gradual process of emancipation of peoples, has been the continuous and enhanced achievement of material welfare with the aid of science. Just as the path to freedom has been illumined by a brightening idea of freedom, so the attainment of prosperity has been accompanied by a demand for prosperity. As needs have been satisfied, new wants have become needs. What once were luxuries have become necessities. Society has become increasingly conscious of its material sustenance ; and modern self-conscious political agitation is increasingly materialistic. There is nothing evil in this. But it is a fact which must be understood before Communism is appreciated as an aspect of the spirit of the age. Communism, being based in part on an outmoded (though not worthless) theory of conduct and history, regards the satisfaction of its demands as the inevitable outcome of a material process. Nowadays, when we are conscious that the psychology of society is both subtler and stupider than the logical processes of thinkers to formula, nowadays it is wiser to describe Communism as the modern form of a demand for material well-being, and a modern progress to the diffusion of material well-being. Its technique expresses this century, with its controls, its taxations, its public services, its regimentation. Even more characteristic is its emphasis on the economic results of technique. It is a cry for wealth out of poverty in a world which is more conscious than ever of wealth and poverty, and is, therefore, both richer and poorer than the world was before.

Regarded in an historic perspective, Communism is a phase in a long process of revolt and emancipation. The subject of the movement is the individual human being articulating himself and expressing his needs. Progressively he has brought his demands down from heaven and made their achievement a problem for the rulers of the earth. But, thanks to a twist in history, which Communist thinkers have over-simplified, the original purpose and the moral inspiration of Communism have been obscured by the technical problems—the problems of State—that have emerged to importance as the human demand has passed from the realm of ideals to the technique of the practical.

Another important factor in the history of this, and cognate, ideals is the fact that, with self-conscious effort, life becomes more complex, and the problems of social organization, the problems of practical psychology, the problems of empirical economics, become problems in themselves rather than mediate questions in the pursuit of larger ends. Vast increases of population have made these complexities infinitely more complex, and have caused men to lose sight of the guiding thread. We live in an age of machines, of which the most remarkable is the modern joint stock state. The great change in Communism consists in this—that instead of an ideal for individuals it has become a theory of the state—and a political process of which the group, not the individual, is the subject. The individual has reverted to the status of object

Communism as a theory has undergone more revolutions than it has caused. These revolutions, doubtless, are due to the changes in the phases of social development. Orthodox Communism, that is to say nineteenth century Communism, which is the middle phase of Communism as it passed out of the pupa of ethical egalitarianism, and before it matured into the chrysalis in which it now exists, Marxian Communism, that vital larval element in modern political thinking, regarded itself as the inevitable manifestation of a material process. In the history of materialism (even in a materialistic interpretation of the history of Communism) this Determinism is the form that the social idea takes

in a materialistic age. It is the iron logic of the machine shop. Similarly, we know now, in this behaviouristic age, of a later, a more dangerous, psychological plane in which the movement is very hard to distinguish from totalitarianism. The synthesis of events which, as we have seen, operates to make Communism come to maturity in this age, goes further and puts it in danger of rationalizing the modern reversion to herd psychology.

It is important for Communism that it be looked at historically, in the light of a history which is richer than the exclusively economic interpreters of it try to believe. Communism must not be judged under present totalitarian appearances. Nor must it be judged in the light of doctrines which were of great practical value as propaganda a century ago, but which are all too pervious to modern criticism. Nowadays it may be true to say of Communism that everything is right about it except its theory. But if the demand for what Communism offers, and the spirit of Communism, are more important than the theory, then criticism, however vigorous, should not prove fatal to its hopes.

II.

In reality, Communism is a very old aspiration. The idea of Community is an ancient and obvious solution to the demand for a liberty which should not be conflict, and an equality that should not be insignificance. The idea was obvious but impracticable before the modern period of mechanism and organization. Until then it enjoyed a Utopian existence, as metaphysics in Plato, as ethics in More and Bacon, as theology during the period when people believed more intensely than they do now in that Garden of Eden myth which the more primitive statements of Communism resembled. In England, particularly, the theological phase of Communism was prolonged and important. "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" constituted the slogan of an early revolt against enclosures; and the idea of a primitive Golden Age, existing before the dawn of privilege and property, was common learning as late as the early nineteenth century—before the industrial revolution had demon-

strated the cruel implications of the doctrine of the natural man.

Communism in its modern form started as a new attempt to solve the problems of liberty and equality through the notion of fraternity. The French Revolution, including the English reforms which inspired it and followed it, was the peak of a period which was conscious of the dawning ideas of liberty and equality, but which was to culminate in the realization that the two ideas did not harmonize without the aid of fraternity. In that period the French learned repeatedly that equality meant the sacrifice of liberty, while the English proved to themselves that political and economic liberty meant the loss of equality. And since, psychologically, liberty to the unequal means equality, and equality to the unfree means freedom, the age which rejoiced in the ideals of the Revolution ended in disillusion.

Meanwhile developments were taking place that involved a reorientation of thinking. The quantitative increases in the populations of industrial states, and the development of technique and organization to control large numbers of people, made obvious the proposition that liberty and equality could not be attained by individuals except through their participation in a harmonious community. The community rather than the individual came to be the unit. Marx realised this. But it is in the experiments of Robert Owen, rather than in the teaching of Marx, that we see the transition from individual adventure to social planning; and planning for society is more essential to Communism than any of those doctrines that form the curriculum of the juvenile parties which are the cherished flower of modern Communist states.

Historically, and politically, and ethically, the important truth about Communism is that it plans society for the benefit of all individuals. Both aspects of this truth are vital. Marx was conscious of this, but the Marxian hypothesis is so involved with a theory, with a strategy and a tactic of groups, and modern society is so conscious of struggle, that the true meaning is forgotten. On the other hand, while individual values are forgotten, social integration goes on, for better or for worse. As quantitative increases bring qualitative changes, phases loom larger than

ultimate purposes : the means obscure the ends ; and in this, the technical age par excellence, the machinery of planned economics has become something in itself, just as the machines in Butler's fantasy dominate the men who should control them.

Nor is the question merely one of complexity. It happens that our present phase is less individualistic than the immediately preceding one, because attainment is harder and group habits are easier ; and individualism in any event is not a complete account of society ; and it happens that in this age of Frazer and Freud (not to speak of the modern savages that those thinkers failed to study), we find that the social aspect of life, and the super-individual forms of authority, and the purposes in which individuals are lost or else fulfilled, now receive an emphasis in life and thought that more than compensates for the period during which they were unscientifically ignored. From contract we are back to status !

In addition, there have been changes in the emphases within Communism, *a change in the meaning of the name* (and we shall see that this is still the subject of conflict), which are differently explicable ; explicable when we consider the revolution that was necessary before a vast number of individuals in one part of the world could even begin to think of their rights as human beings. Under revolutionary auspices, Communism has been used to heal sick nations. Communism in Russia, and in forgotten Mexico, has been a political instrument, operating among the problems of politics proper, and has become at times all but identified with a type and technique of nationalism in which origins are forgotten and ideals are crushed.*

Communism has therefore acquired a " revolutionary " significance in this century. But in the long run a revolution does little more than clear the ground. If a revolution continues as revolution and its leaders begin to live the revolutionary life for its own sake, then the revolution has failed. In modern times the danger has been real that Communism militant might lose its

*Contrast Palestine where the " escapist " Communism of the Kerritzoth has been productive of nothing but good.

vision of Communism triumphant. For evidently that technology, and that apparatus of nationalism which may have aided and protected the purposes of the Commune in Russia or in Mexico, have, in at least three other countries, harnessed the revolutionary urge to purposes, which, if achieved, are the ruin of any ideal that is worthy of the name. Communism suffers from the internal danger of succumbing to these temptations: and the technique adopted has given a not entirely specious justification to those advanced elements in the world, the liberals of the world in the wide sense, who are human enough to be afraid of the implications of their own thought.

CHAPTER II.

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM.

COMMUNISM is a fact and an idea; an idea in the process of becoming a fact. Its real meaning is lost in any history of the particular movement or movements conventionally described as Communism; is lost in any systematic statement of Communist doctrine orthodox or heterodox; nor is it found in the criticism of the movement, or of the doctrines, whatever they are, from any accepted political standpoint. What should concern the student of modern politics, above all else, are those tendencies in modern behaviour which seem to be permanent. These the Communistic movement, and Communist practice, good or bad, express directly or by conflict. There is a drift in the world towards Communism. That drift is the almost imperceptible changing of many emphases in economic organization, social habits, and legal institutions. It is also the possible trend of psychological changes in the average human being—changes that are fraught with peculiar dangers. These dangers, and the hopes from which they spring, make it important that Communism shall be thought about exactly, not inexactly. This is not easy when the common sense of a word is rough; and when some people use it as a description of the eleemosynary, others as an epithet for devastating sin.

If indeed, Communism is a sin, it is one of those sins that cover a multitude of charities. Also, by common consent, it is a heresy, and much confused with other heresies, such as Socialism. Consequently it does not fall easily into any conventional classification. Like so many words that end in ism the words Communism and Socialism are easy to use, and easier to abuse. Hence grievous conflicts and misunderstandings, and the paraphernalia of Inquisition and heresy-hunting in Communist countries and

Capitalist countries alike. " Notable enough, here as elsewhere, wilt thou find the potency of names."

For analytic purposes, however, it is sufficient to give a definition which shall cover more than one interpretation of the Communist movement, and shall account for the fact that the movement is a dynamic one—that is to say, is still a movement. The political philosopher sits on the top of the wall between ideas, and, like his original, Humpty-Dumpty, feels entitled to pay his words double and work them harder. Therefore, conscious that no definition can fail to disturb the corpse either of Engels or of Marx, of Kropotkin or of Bakunin, of Ulianof or of Braunstein, one may venture to define or describe Communism as a degree of Socialism.

Defining or describing Socialism (also rather arbitrarily) as a movement which emphasizes the Social purpose of government—emphasizing the function of government " for the people " at the expense of the idea of government " by the people "—one may say that Communism is that social purpose emphasized further; Socialism carried towards a logical conclusion, which, be it observed, is not necessarily its politically probable conclusion. That this cognatic relationship of ideas is well grounded is evidenced by the title that the Russians give to their state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; and the difficulty of distinguishing between the two ideas is evidenced by the vagueness, in recent years, of Socialist programmes which fell short of Communism, and by the intimately hostile relationship between the exponents of Communism of various types and the defenders of Socialism in all its 57 varieties. Between these there has been warfare reminiscent of the wars of religion; and we know that wars between cognate religions are bloodier than crusades against infidels. Thus the hatred or contempt of Communist for Socialist suggests the hatred of Calvinist for Lutheran, Lutheran for Anglican, Anglican for Roman, rather than the almost partiality of Christianity for Islam. The fierceness of the conflict reveals the degree of intimacy. And, in the course of this conflict, changes in Socialism by way of concession to Communism indicate

the direction of the political evolution; notwithstanding that in very recent years Socialism has done much to conquer her fierce conqueror.

Of common doctrines between Socialism and Communism there are too many to enumerate in a short space. Indeed, there is no Communist doctrine which has not been claimed at some time or other by persons who will not accept the description of themselves as Communist. Two possible lines of demarcation are, however, worth considering. One is vague, but real. This lies in the fact that the Socialist is more concerned nowadays with broad ideals and narrow reforms. The Communist, on the other hand, demands more sweeping reforms and states his ideals in narrower and more concrete terms. The Communist, of the modern orthodox type, is more committed than the Socialist to a certain metaphysical system, on which purports to be based a clear, more or less revolutionary, programme. On the other hand, both Socialist and Communist have, in modern times, changed ground (which may or may not have been common ground) by moving from anarchism to a more pronounced belief in the State.

And herein lies the second distinction. Communism nowadays seems to involve a higher degree of State Capitalism than does Socialism. Both regard the State as the only sound Capitalist; but the Communist State undertakes more. Both regard the employees of the State as shareholders; but the Communist allows the shareholder at once fewer rights and more benefits. And the Communist refuses in theory to tolerate, what the Socialist accepts, that variety of State Capitalism in which there are bondholders who are not also employees. Perhaps it is permissible to induce from this that, technically, at least, Communism is nearer to a "social" standpoint than Socialism, and is therefore more promising and more dangerous.

In practice Socialism has gone so far, and active Communism has so changed in the light of political experience, that similarities are now more evident than they ever were since the Russian Revolution. Many features of Communism now appear to be

traditions which Communism itself may well outlive, proving thereby that the moderation of the Socialists was not, to use typical language, the rationalization of the machinations of Capitalistic chauvinism. These (mostly metaphysical) features include the rather naive apparatus of dialectical materialism, the theory of the class war (which is its practical manifestation and equally crude), the belief in the eventual abolition of the State, in the dangers of religion, and in the need for revolution. As to the last, it must not be wrongly estimated. In this vastly accelerated age, the difference between revolution and evolution is less clear than it was ; because the seizure of a central power station is easier than the piecemeal overthrow of chieftains. Therefore there is little substance in that old cliche of the demagogues (Evolution not Revolution) which was used to distinguish Communism from Socialism, the Continent from England.

Nevertheless, revolutions spring from very special circumstances. Much of the Communist programme becomes better understood when one realizes that it was the propaganda instrument of a violent (because long delayed) revolution ; and that, a revolution against a Feudalism and a Clericalism which have had no analogy in Europe since the French Revolution.

History, in articulating Communism, has shown it to be the subject of degree. The Communism which is characteristic of Soviet Russia includes doctrines of class war which were important because on them was based the technique of Bolshevism. Bolshevism was the determined attitude of a resolute minority (called Bolsheviki because they were the majority at a famous Socialist congress) which, under the leadership of Lenin, cut its way through the compromises of provisional governments (such as that of Kerensky), and the ineffective, because vague, idealism of more moderate Socialists, and seized the helm of Russian affairs towards the end of 1917.* Their violences were the normal

*The opposite of Bolshevik is Menshevik—a minority man at that (1903) Congress, with less pronounced views on revolutionary technique. Much modern Russian history becomes explicable when we remember that Trotsky was a Menshevik—and only Lenin forgave him for it.

violences of revolution. Their theoretical extravagances seem less justified in our day, now that the postulates of their world are established. Probably Bolshevism has run its course.

What remains then, still, to distinguish Communism from Socialism ? Assuming that moribund theories are dead already, it is possible to say that the important distinction is one which both Socialists and Communists recognize and regret. It is a difference that can only be resolved by changes in the organization of the world—changes that may not be practicable. The difference has been stated in the varying formulae of the Russian Five Year Plans. "From each according to his power: to each according to his need." That is the ideal of Socialism, but was thought to be the practical politics of Communism. Now the legend runs: "From each according to his power: to each according to his work." That is the slogan of a country which reverted to Capitalistic method in order to achieve the wherewithal of Communism. It expresses the attitude of the moderate Socialist who piously hopes that time and progress will make it an anachronism.

In the last analysis, then, the difference is circumstantial, historical and psychological: important differences, but not essential or ultimate. Both Socialism and Communism are ideals, ideals the opposite of self-interested unenlightenment. Their ideal is achieved when people work for the sake of the work rather than for what they can get out of it; or when they work disinterestedly for the community. That ideal is put into practice, to some degree, when people express themselves artistically, or when they share treasures, such as artistic treasures, without any desire to reduce them to personal property. A man enjoys the benefits of a public library, or an art gallery, or a place of recreation such as a park, without manifesting the least desire to own the land or the books or the pictures. His attitude, then, is comparable with Communism. He may even manifest that attitude in business or industry, if (as rarely) he arrives at a stage where the work interests him for its own sake, and he feels responsibility to those working with him. That is a moral

attitude. It may be an ingredient of Communism, but it is also compatible with a different economic organization. Probably, it has the best chance of flourishing in a Society which is relatively emancipated from the economic motive of private profit. Once that level is attained the form of Society does not matter.

One must however, avoid the facile criticism that Communism is only possible when man is perfect, and that when man is perfect he needs no Communism. The dilemma is easily reversed. If man is imperfect he needs Communism; if perfect it does him no harm. This type of criticism is a rationalization of self-interest in the majority of cases. It goes with the subtle strategy of grudging recognition that is now so useful in reactionary technique. What it ignores is precisely the psychological dynamic which makes Communism a political factor. Communism differs from different degrees of Socialism, and, *a fortiori*, from the most benevolent Capitalism, in that its idealism operates at the level of the practical. Its psychology is concrete not vague; concerned with the immediate, not Messianic. Consequently Communism has become much more than a state of mind.

The world to-day is dealing with Communism as practical economic organization; not as a form of religion or ethics. Therefore, in asking himself to what degree any particular nation is Communistic, let the inquirer not be content to discover that England or France or Switzerland is philanthropic and to stop at that. In practical political life, where the main realities, unfortunately, appear to be economic realities, the question is whether the particular social, political, economic organization can still correctly be described as Capitalistic; and if not, then to what degree the system participates or is likely to participate in social planning. If there is present in the country an intellectual willingness coupled with volitional reluctance, resulting in unsystematic reform, the country in question may be described as Socialistic. Its standpoint is not quite individualistic, but it guards the entrenched positions of some individuals rather than the rights of all. If the social system has, however, become completely social in purpose then the country is Communistic. In-

dividuals are repressed, but as the system matures they come into the enjoyment of rights.

Yet these questions are not as easily answered as asked. Political life is dynamic, not static. When the trends of modern life and legislation are analysed, it will appear that many Communist developments are no novelty in Europe. It may be discovered, for example, that things are happening in England, under present organization, smoothly and efficiently, that are done among the Communists with difficulty. Collectivist reform within Capitalistic England has been almost revolutionary in effect.

Surprisingly, England, reactionary, but never so nervous as the *raffish legitimist nations* of the Continent, goes far towards becoming the object-lesson in the evolution of Communism. Here, close at hand, we have the virtues and the vices of the system in process of development. We can watch the growth of social effort—social planning—and with it the growth of a public service in which "everybody's business is nobody's business" and the public employee is as far removed from responsibility and the consciousness of purpose as any wage slave in a large-scale private enterprise.

In the light of new contrasts, and stranger similarities, the truth appears to be this—that the distinction between Communism and Capitalism (especially in its modern form of State Capitalism) is not so important and not so significant as it appears to those who regard politics as propaganda. To make the distinction important means making economics too important. The real desideratum is Responsibility—and for that there is no easy formula. To one who seeks for social progress, and who regards the economic as less than politics, politics as less than life, there is no virtue in Capitalism, no panacea in Communism. Admitted merits are no criterion of efficiency or stability. But, for present purposes, suffice it to say that Communism itself has been more misunderstood than its opposite because modern heathens have been content to fight their wars of religion in the names of very material gods.

CHAPTER III.

FROM CULT TO CRITIQUE.

IN politics, in ethics, in all aspects of life, Communism is difficult, even dangerous, doctrine because it has come to responsibility before maturity, has achieved technical, before theoretic or moral, perfection. And that in an age when the moral and intellectual virtues are more in demand than ever before, and when more than the practical successes, which bring acceptance, a movement needs a faith of sorts behind it to prevent its successes from being abused. At present the antitheses that may some day be tragic conflicts are worth stating at least as paradoxes. One of these paradoxes, it is fervently hoped, is correct; that, from the ashes of its doctrine, Communism has emerged as valuable and permanent reform.

Modern doctrinal Communism is a blend of cult and critique typically characteristic of the nineteenth century; a sort of positivism emerging from the negation of accepted values; a synthesis of materialistic ideals. But practical Communism is the creature of the cynical unidealistic twentieth century, in which criticism is mainly destructive and materialism is completely unidealistic. This is a paradox that ceases to be startling when one realizes that there are many parallels to it in the history of ideals. So other ideals have passed in transition from the levels of religion and ethics into the lower orders which are politics. Thus the attack on property, like the attack on privilege, like the attack on despotism in previous centuries, was universally accepted by the world's moralists (and all men are moralists in matters that do not immediately concern them), yet became almost universally condemned as they actualized and realized themselves in practical life.

And this realization of ideals, it is to be observed, usually comes after the ethical or religious belief has passed the zenith of conviction and is sinking to its nadir. So Christianity became

universal after people had ceased to believe in its eschatology. So individualism, the dream of the seventeenth century, that century of genius, was politically achieved in the subsequent century of rationalism, scepticism, and disillusion. The political tide did not flow so high as the tide of hope, but it did not recede so far. Similarly, the wave of Communistic idealism, which swept the nineteenth century and receded, has been followed by a steadier flow of political tendencies which are at once less romantic and less reversible.

Communism, as an ideal, is so much a part of the world's thought that its appearance as popular doctrine in any time of social ferment is only to be expected; for in such times, the Lollards and Levellers of the world come temporarily into their own. But Communism as a comprehensive system is so integrally involved with nineteenth century thought that its appearance in the twentieth century seems an anachronism. The truth is that Society lags behind its thinkers. The Communist would say that the theory must wait upon the conditions of class conflict which it expresses. A sounder historical view is possibly this: that the criticism of an age involves the perceiving of incipient significant changes, like the rise of the middle class in the seventeenth century, and the increase of the proletariat to middle-class stature in the nineteenth century; and to the extent that the prognostication was accurate, the critical system comes true.

But, since philosophies tend to be stated in abstractions, metaphors, and extravagances, the political changes that eventually supervene are always less revolutionary, and more continuous with history, than the early propagandists and the (later) enemies of the movement lead the world to expect. And to this must be added the thought that, historically, the political revolutions of the world seem to take place in dispirited and critical times, rather than in times of creativity and high endeavour. The world does not move as fast as its ideal. If it turns in any direction, it turns slowly and sluggishly. That is why we, who see the end product of revolution, are conscious of the extravagance of the thoughts that originally inspired it.

Thus it comes about that in this, the twentieth century, the world accepts some of the practical manifestations of a doctrine in which contemporary thought recognizes certain absurdities. The world accepts Communism and, at the same time, refuses to believe in it. And Communism, as it develops, finds reason to disbelieve its own doctrine—as must any evolving movement. New emphasis takes the place of the old. Thus Communism, true to the doctrine that ideas are a function of the material environment, comes to fruition at the end of a long process of overcrowding, as the population of the Western world increased during the industrial revolution. At the same time Communism, in coming to fruition, realizes also the dynamic force of ideas, of ideals, of personalities, and of forces which, noble or base, are not economic. Moreover, as the doctrines crystallize into, and create, political entities, the doctrines cease to matter. Indeed, it is natural that this cult (like cults in general) should pass away, and with it, all its uncritical violences, because it has fulfilled its function; and out of it there has crystallized a more restrained, pertinent and practical, critique—and a political methodology directed to the solution of the more technical and less academic problems of social adjustment.

Communism survives, then, not as creed, but as critique; and not as critique on any cosmic scale, but rather as the spirit of a practical movement, a movement conscious that it is better equipped than other systems to cope with economic problems. So regarded it meets now with sympathy from those who see the moral excesses of the present so-called Capitalist system; and that moral sympathy is indeed truer to the real inspiration of Communism than are the dialectical constructions of nineteenth century thinkers. Moreover, by achieving, in modern times, a practical form, Communism discovers that its problems are not peculiar problems. Modern economic problems, resultant of changes in the scale of industrial organization, do not differ fundamentally whether in the context of Communism or Capitalism.

The railway, the cotton mill, the State itself, must show a

surplus, whether under Communism or Capitalism, whether in money or in barterable commodities, or in ergs, or foot-pounds, or utilities in the widest sense. Distribution does not solve those problems of production which modern Nationalism has shown to be crucial. In general, changes in quantity have brought about changes in quality. New complexes emerge. The problems of industrial relations inside and outside the State are not created by Communism and not completely solved. These problems conjure up Communism, and Communism endeavours to eliminate the prejudices, obsessions, and vested interests that make their solution more difficult.

For the rest, Communism is continuous with Capitalism rather than conflicting. It is freer, because relatively emancipated from some of the more dogmatic obsessions of a property-conscious world. But that emancipation still leaves most of the social problems to be solved. The State, which is the present instrument of Communism, is not a cleverer Capitalist than the individual. The unit of Communism, whether it is the State, the group, or the world, must adopt the same technique as the joint stock company and meet the same difficulties. In approaching these and other problems, Communism is, nowadays, conscious of its limitations. No longer does it lay claim to the miraculous constituent in religion; and it does not claim to be a cure for all ills.

A second paradox in the modern history of Communism follows the first. At the time that Communism was endeavouring to achieve respectability, realizing itself as political economy and leaving behind it the clouds of glory that belong to the academic and unachieved—at that time, opposition came to it from enemies who used its early exaggerations with which to bludgeon it. Cynical use was made by reactionaries of doctrines of class war which Russian Communism was trying to outgrow, but which its enemies did not allow it to forget. In that way, they made the class war more of a reality than it had ever been before. Those who have now made their peace, in the midst of war, with the "master-mind crocodiles" whom they once fished with hooks, must accept responsibility for having prevented the organizers

of a timely revolution from leading their followers into the paths of peace. So there was perpetuated a conflict which prevented the world from reaping the benefits that the Russian experiment had sown for it. Instead there was a constant sowing of storm and a consequent reaping of whirlwind.

Communism has, in the teeth of opposition and misunderstanding (of which the worst kind was purposive), introduced into government a postulate that had long been demanding acceptance within the order of politics. Economic equality, achieved through state control of vital capital, has long been recognized on all sides as a desideratum for the welfare of society. What the Communists were doing was to reconstruct society in order to fulfil demands of which even reactionary society was fully conscious. Nearly a century ago the English Tories, then powerful enough to be able to indulge in sentiment, had accepted from their far seeing leader his condemnation of the existence of two nations (the exploiting and the exploited) within one state. For long a country like England has been conscious that a legal system which seemed to emphasise the liberty (the untouchability) of the individual was being sabotaged by the economic liberty which it protected, so that freedom was being deprived of its inner reality. Hence modern collectivist legislation; and now the trend of European legislation has for so long been directed to economic readjustment, to the detriment of the powerful, that the opposition to Communism in the last two decades is suspect as intellectually dishonest.

If full condemnation is wanted, it is to be found in the cynical advantage that was then taken of weaknesses in Communism which were evidently due to political immaturity. An outmoded anarchism, perpetuated defensively in the Comintern, was at the mercy of intellectual chicanery. The leaders of opportunism were prepared at all times to debate the class war into being; and in international affairs (the *locus classicus* of irresponsibility) they were prepared to adopt and exploit every error in Communism, every fallacy in the economic misinterpretation of history, when,

at and after Versailles, they endeavoured to redraft geography in a system of economic units.

In the teeth of this confused opposition Communism has restated itself, more modestly, and perhaps in perpetuity, as a system of practical politics. Gone are its metaphysics. Dogmas have become doctrines: and doctrines are now seen to possess the limited truth which is possessed by abstractions, and the unimportance into which abstractions drift when their inherent truth is concretized into the practical, and so longer requires to be pictorialized or exaggerated.

So there disappear much of the ideology of Communism and the paraphernalia of its materialist ideals. Perhaps we have seen the end of a "political" religion existing to the detriment of other beliefs. Atheism is no longer an essential in Communist orthodoxy. Politically valuable in the revolt against Rasputinism, and as an endeavour to prevent the sentimental rationalization of reaction, the taste for Godlessness was destined not to be acquired by people whose devotion to Communism springs from their natural belief in a pervading Charity. Indeed a homily could be preached, by those who are interested in preaching, on the historical text that, when Russia was forcibly brought into contact with the political realities which she had concealed from herself, her people flocked to the churches for the first time since the Revolution. That illustrates, incidentally, the proposition that a movement is not to be judged by its metaphysicians.

Godlessness was one of many anachronisms in Communist thought, a superstition surviving from the nineteenth century. Now Communism is no longer the creed of stern nineteenth century Atheists. Those were God-intoxicated men. They had sufficient faith in their mechanical world system not to tremble at unexpected thunders from the blue. They claimed that they saw life whole and clearly, not through the dark glass of revealed religion, but through the brighter lenses ground for them by Spinoza. Unlike those heroes, the modern peasant or proletarian cries, like the idolatrous Laban, reproachfully, "You have stolen my gods." The smaller man, the twentieth century sceptic (and

most men are small and sceptical), is not capable fo substituting for religion a purely theoretic ideal, and he finds comfort with those who can say to him: "Think not because thou art a Communist that we shall have no more bread and wine."

This age has seen the end of spiritual adventure, and its intellectual explorers have forgotten the cities of their dreams. Vanished the cloud capped towers! Already the gossamer fabrics of Hegelianism had been blown to shreds by the rising industrial breezes at the turn of the century. Enlightenment brought disillusion. The dawning rays of science had, indeed, banished mythologies, but had failed to reveal the golden patterns of unity and perfection that the hierophants of humanity had expected to see revealed. Heights and depths still existed, and shadows and crevices, and an ugly array of brutal facts and truths the less pleasant for being psychological. The modern political and economic explorers have come to know their way better about this world; but now they are conscious, at last, of its intransigent differences and difficulties. Now, however, they are content to plan this world and to chart it. No longer do they endeavour to transmute it into an earthly paradise. Rightly they have ceased to be theologians. Ideals are not idols. And modern man has ceased to be interested in making idols or in destroying them.

But the best of progressives as they encounter opposition, which increases with their moderation, do draw enthusiasm from the fact that they are the heirs of a semi-religious tradition, a tradition of not unhealthy iconoclasm. In the preservation of this outlook the forceful, but inexact, intellectual system to which they adhere stands them in good stead. They are mystics because they purport to apprehend some truth or other of history which welds their system better than logic. Fortified by that mysticism they find, even in their melancholy doctrines, the grounds of optimism. Determinism, and the acceptance as good of what they believe to be inevitable, makes them optimistic and defiant; and it gives them some confidence in aggression against resistance, that they can believe that only the forces of idle antiquity are arrayed against them, that the forces of the future are at their back.

PART II.

MISADVENTURES OF AN IDEA.

CHAPTER I.

REVOLT AND REVERSION.

WE have lived at the peak of a period of political development. Yet, if one may adopt the language of the personage best qualified to describe this age—the Red Queen, to wit—there have been peaks of progress which make the heights recently achieved look like valleys. There have been periods of world history (apparently less rich than this) when our planet seemed to be climbing towards the zenith. Later it seems to have wandered to nadir; or, worse, has ceased to move in an orbit, and has appeared to gyrate sluggishly on its axis—a symbol of malignance in the period of decadence through which most of us have passed.

The twentieth century has been anti-climax to the nineteenth, the modern Georgian period anti-climax even to the Edwardian. The nineteenth century, to those who lived through it, or felt its influence before and during the last Great War, must have seemed like a steep ascending spiral. That was their idea of evolution. The lower levels were at times out of sight from the higher, but from all levels there was always a glimpse of something above. The degrees of progress were recognizable and spacious. The progressive individualists had not yet realized that their emancipation was itself only a phase, and that, in a wider context and a longer period, there was to be recapitulation, among their more sophisticated successors, of the restrictions and the protections which they thought had ended. Nor had they realized that their own progress would some day manifest the limitations at once of satiety and of incompleteness. The spiral of progress was destined to flatten out into vortex and vicious circle. The

circles of wealth were about to contract, the outer margin of poverty (real, albeit comparative) was about to close in. Subsequently progress has changed into monotonous process ; the gradient has diminished, and eventually a stage has been reached of meaningless motion. A fast motion, but with no recognizable advance ; on the other hand, a tendency to descend easily down the curve from standards to averages, from ideals to habit. And this phase of entropy has been the two recent decades of the twentieth century.

Thus, in a very long perspective, the period 1919-1939 will doubtless be regarded as nothing more important than a moment in the acceleration of transport—especially aerial transport ; incidentally, a general perfecting of communications, mainly earthy communications, and such as "corrupt good manners." The direction of the transport and the nature of the communications are indicated by the fact that the period is also an interval between two wars differing only in tempo and intensity. To those who lived through those years self-consciously it was a period which, for all its possibilities, eventually found no more satisfying form of expression than the increase of speed and the perfection of destructive weapons. I say the perfection, not the invention, because application rather than discovery, technique rather than creative endeavour, is the characteristic of the period ; a period which, in that respect, is more comparable to the parallel years in the eighteenth century than to the parallel years in the glorious nineteenth. A period this, during which ideas were applied and popularized and commercially exploited that had been previously discovered ; a period in which distribution mattered more than production (for production was blind) ; a period of self-conscious analysis rather than imaginative synthesis ; a period of prose with a dearth of poetry ; and in thought (in England at all events—perhaps not in America) a reversion from the romantic to the psychological ; and, then, from introspection to the varieties of physiological and mental thrill. This by way of escape from the failure of intellectual adventure into life. And, since intellect during this period could only occupy itself

with astringent criticism and an all too justified commination, the majority sought refuge in the less exacting pursuit of material plenty and pleasure.

This in itself was a failure in the process of human integration; but it was symptomatic of worse. Speed is potentially destructive. At a high speed you pass, and reduce to the instantaneous (even to nonentity), spaces and magnitudes which have been created in long periods of time. That illusion of destructiveness is heightened, and may cease to be illusion, when the increase of speed is accompanied by the abolition of destination. That is the significant modern paradox; a world with its engine racing and nowhere to go. Its human manifestation is a brain beyond control, an intellect which, having failed to create, tends therefore to destroy: alternates, rather, between idleness and destructiveness; idleness (of which unemployment is one instance) during which the mind turns in upon itself destructively.

The preoccupation of a hedonistic world with armaments (even the unnatural abolitionism—so like American prohibition) was symbolic of this. First obsession—and then neurosis. Events abroad had shown by 1931 that the spark can pass easily from the pole of self-indulgence to the pole of cruelty, from apathy to mischief. In England the disease was at the stage of apathy, which is the earlier phase and the essential symptom of modern decadence. England seemed, during this time, to go pale with the pallor of acedia—not (as was suspected) of fear. Admittedly we have not yet suffered in England those fevers that flushed the marble of ancient Athens, or consumed the colours of the Renaissance; nor have we suffered the scoriasis which revealed itself on the body politic of eighteenth century France or modern Czarist Russia. What we have experienced is rather a species of anaemia, a thinness of the blood stream, an apathy of the leucocytes that animate the white races, and a consequent paralysis of the will, which only the most drastic purgation could prevent from degenerating into mania.

The decadence of a nation, like the degeneration of an individual, is apt to express itself, primarily, in cycles of unhealthy pessimism,

relieved by periods of unjustified optimism which only serve to darken the dependent shadow. The intellectual fault and symptom is an exaggerated self-consciousness, mordant self-criticism, a testing of values leading to scepticism, suggestive of the testing of peace which leads to war. Such a period, before it culminates in social suicide, produces more than one flash of hopeful political enterprise, which disappears quickly, leaving the landscape darker than before.

Thus the lamp of Socialism (a lamp not only to those who believed in it) flared brightly more than once during the last two decades, only to be gutted by the damp ardour of those who half wanted to accept it. Socialism, and the degree of it which is Communism, are typical of the age because they express at once the spirit of revolt and the danger of reversion. They represent the latest phase of that articulation of life which changes the slaves of the world into its masters, the objects of authority into the subjects of free institutions. They also involve (as dangers) the psychological problems of this uneducated mastery, perplexity as to the real purpose of any authority, heightened chances of explosion and disaster as the poles of society are brought into contact, fears of extremism as extremes meet, and, emanating from progressives and reactionaries alike, a short circuit of life into regimentation and tyranny.

Communism (a highly systematised form of Socialism) has been described as an optimistic creed. Certainly it expresses the confidence of the nineteenth century thinkers who thought in systems. But this present period has been conscious only of the psychological defects in Communist theory and oblivious of its logical aspiration. For this age has been a psychological age rather than a logical one. Nineteenth century Communism, which pretended to inevitability, rested on a tacit belief in the perfectability of man and in the continuance of a perceptible process of perfecting. The twentieth century, in which means to perfection were attained, has been conscious only of the imperfections of man.

Socialism, an admitted ideal, and, all over the world, an actualization of substantial progress, has been the unhappy medium

of a transition from nineteenth century revolt to twentieth century reversion. Socialism, and the " stepping down " of political and economic life to the average of the classes that were now becoming articulate, seemed itself to be a pedestrian process, like the later phases of the last war, and a retreat from individual adventure—just as the Peace seemed to be retreat from the high aspirations of 1914. The world seemed, after the first excitement had died down, to be bored and morbid, to be concerned with its body rather than its mind, with its pathology rather than with the possibilities of healthy achievement. The very averageness of social progress militated against enthusiasm. The world had not yet seen the glamour of change that was to spread over those countries where the aims of the masses became the material of large scale political and military undertaking.

Moreover, in a context that mattered, affairs were moving strangely. The phenomenon of revolution, going further than was really hoped, and faring worse to outward appearances, has proved, in this age as in previous ages, a dangerous watershed of ideals. The realization of ideals has always been dangerous to the mental balance of idealists ; and so, especially, of the ideals of materialism, which, being in part achieved, give scope to forces in human nature which are anything but idealistic, and which give rise, in turn, to problems from a lower level of life. It is therefore typical of this age that Communism has become obsessed with abuses of technique, with the problems of Fascism, in fact—indeed has given material to Fascism—and has let its ideals be forgotten in a jesuitic preoccupation with means, and in the modern craving for machinery.

Those who lived conscious of European history, and particularly of English history, during the 1920's, and who remember, for example, the confusion of loyalties and disloyalties that was manifested during the General Strike (when the law itself was perverted to the purposes of faction) have witnessed a piece of history suggestive of the British reaction to the French Revolution : have been witnesses of similar exasperations on the part of idealistic thinkers, and have seen that confused battling which resulted in

the leaving of unidealistic leaders, and more cynical revolutionaries, in possession of the field. Then the issue was joined between, on the one side, intellectual dishonesty, and on the other side, an out-moded anarchism taking refuge in the citadels of Revolution, and perpetuating in the Comintern a blustering defensive threat against psychological strongholds—which were weaker than they knew. The losers in the consequent struggle were the intellectuals and aspirants to welfare, who wandered aimlessly in the ways of the " right " because they could not look for inspiration beneath the superficial extravagances of the " left."

Meanwhile what should have been an interplay of criticism became (on the most charitable construction) a war of religion; one religion chaotic and bloodthirsty, the other over-sophisticated, superstitious and reactionary; and both fundamentally vague. And while the sects were jarring, there grew up in Europe a generation that needed guidance and only found seduction. In this, the most materialistic of the ages, when everything combines to make men over-interested in their physical welfare, there has been lacking the balanced philosophy which should prevent this materialism from degenerating into hedonism and military violence.

To the historian of the future it may appear (as an absurdity) that this age has been punished merely for a failure to believe intensely enough, and a failure to criticise intelligently enough. Moral and intellectual error have never been so fiercely visited on the generations. Passivity has never incurred so cruel a reckoning.

The error consisted in this, that—while logic was being bandied about by doctrinaires, a new behaviour was making itself manifest and went unobserved. The world had said " Hail psychology." The formulae of individualism and community were fusing together to rationalize a reversion to cruelties below the level of humanity. Those who speculated about, and fought against, red-perils (as earlier cranks had fought against yellow ones) left unnoticed the emergence of a new peril, a mongolism from far beyond the borders of Russia or China, indeed, from as far away as the border of lunacy—which is the limit of the European mind. While the

economic man of Marx was being exorcised, a more primitive world, a Frazerian world, a world of ignoble savages, so different from the ideal primitives of economic speculation, was moving in, as if from Polynesia, into Europe. London and Moscow, Paris and Weimar, were disputing the logic of materialism, in blissful ignorance of the psychological materialism that was moving to a new consummation. From scepticism and mysticism into anarchy —the famous night "in which all cows were black," was dawning into a day in which all shirts were blackshirts. Conventional atheism and conventional religion alike were oblivious of this new obscenity with which the world was being suffused, this new cult emerging. And perhaps the proper nemesis of London, Moscow, Paris and Weimar consisted, not in the failure of any conventional doctrine or recognized political movement or party, but in the unnoticed fact that, in a dark corner of Europe, an ignorant but inspired orator, an idiot-prophet and a harbinger of moral melancholia, was constructing the crude but convincing synthesis that expresses the spirit of the period, and was living the experiences of *Mein Kampf*.

We have seen the age of Caligari and of Hitler, an age in which the wishes and thinking of Lenin received hideous fulfilment in the nightmares of Freud. And those who lived through those years self-consciously are witnesses to truths about tragedy that even the Ibscenest of Victorian realists never conceived. We are witnesses of the terrible retribution that is visited upon the venial sin, on the sins of omission rather than the sins of commission, yet visitations of a Freudian appropriateness, reminiscent of an eye for an eye, and descending down the generations with more than Biblical vicariousness. The sour grapes of abortive progress had set the teeth of the children on edge. Thus an age which refused the demands of intellect has been destroyed by the perversion of intellect. An age which failed to give articulation to the powers of youth has seen its own progeny destroyed by perverters of youth. Because the leaders of the world failed to see the stagnation of their own age, they did not realize the capacity for destruction latent in the unexpressed creativity of the age;

failed to perceive the growth of forces which either must be expressed or be destroyed, but could not be ignored or inhibited. So the baser tendencies of life must be directed or sublimated else lead to madness.

In such an age it is necessary that values be restated so as to give expression to forces which the forms of the age are inadequate to express. Shakespeare realized this when, in a period of stagnation, following, like ours, upon a climax of heroism and adventure, he saw the danger that great potentialities might be turned to evil—and expressed his fears in the morbid persecution mania of Lear, in the thwarted ambitions of Macbeth. In such plays, and in such a period, conventional distinctions between good and evil are inadequate to state the dramatic conflict. In such an age there are heroes different from Agamemnon, men and groups who must be judged by the fullness or failure of their lives and who embody a will to power. If they find in the age an expression which fulfils the age, not destroys it, then the age becomes a great age again. If they do not find such expression, then, in our primitive society, they are certain to destroy, not to fulfil. If, in such a drama, there is a hero acceptable to morality it is the victim. Such victims are the present generation, sufferers for venial sins, and now expressing every degree of purgation by suffering; unrelieved as yet by the intervention of the god of machines.

CHARTER II.

THE NEW LIGHT.

THE years through which we have lived seem, in recollection, to have been dark and bleak ; not an unfertile time-scape, but locust-eaten. Yet those who reap the harvest of these years may find that they were not barren, even after devastation, and not sown entirely with tares.

The history of the last war is symbolic. It started at the instigation of War Lords and as a consequence of dynastic intrigues. It finished in a world turned republican and proletarian, with the only surviving monarchs constitutional ones, the only surviving leaders Captains of Industry. During five years of destruction society achieved on a large scale a creative consciousness of latent powers. That happened throughout the world. But in the very heart of the conflict one significant event took place. The cunning fool who then presided over the Central Powers employed for his immediate purpose a group of men who embodied, violently and extravagantly but sincerely, those aspirations which were dawning more obscurely in the consciousness of the rest of the world. Kaiser Wilhelm sent the Bolshevik leaders to Russia.

The cynic may comment on this that the gift was repaid when Socialism gave Hitler to Germany. But these interchanges, the jests of History, or of historians, are merely flashes from the adventurous career of a coruscating idea. The paradox of the first great war is introductory to the paradox of the first attempted internationally planned peace. That peace was defeated because of many things ; because politics was unbalanced ; because of an epidemic of vice ; and because the world's military problems were not completely solved in 1919. But not least among the causes must also be numbered intellectual confusion. And this

was due to good influences, not to bad,. That very idea which was realizing itself in institutions, and reforming them, operated at first to bewilder, not to enlighten. Many people were confused by excess of light; and others were afraid of the light; but in general the darkness that prevailed upon people, and weighed them down like the darkness of Egypt, was enlightenment, not obscurity.

The implications of a new idea, when that idea commences to be practical, almost necessarily conjure from society reaction and heresiphobia. Even the enlightened recoil from it. Erasmus will have nothing of Luther. The Socialist leaders will have nothing of Communism. It was not appreciated that in that degree of Socialism which is Communism there is much that expresses emerging social realities. What seemed to matter was that in its doctrines there was error, error of over-statement, which has been, incidentally, responsible for many other errors by reason of the reaction that it provoked; and more, by reason of its very success. These considerations created an unmerited antipathy to an important movement. We realize, now, moreover, that the political setting of nascent Communism, in the defeated ally of a nation which is notoriously kinder to fallen foes than to fallen friends, was for some time an unfavourable context for its truth. Military reactions combined with political reactions to make the Communist into the death's head of politics, and to make him play that part in self-defence. Only that feature of Communism was accepted which is its economic over-emphasis. And, ironically, a practical economic interpretation of history was accepted by the Bankers of Paris and of the City of London, as well as by the Conservative Trade Unions, as an aid to their misinterpretation of politics.

But human history is too strong for its doctrinaires and for its cynics. The last quarter of a century has seen Communism come true in the right way as well as in the wrong way. European industrialism has achieved the conditions for Communism; and this present war, in completing the process of industrialism, has demonstrated two further facts. It has demonstrated that

society can make a planned effort involving almost unlimited private sacrifice. It has also demonstrated the essential soundness, amidst accidental weaknesses and historic stupidities, of the Russian political economic experiment. It has demonstrated in particular the existence of an ethical continuity in the Western World which still makes for social progress and prevents the violences of class-warfare. Danger has finally stamped this partial morality with the hall-mark of permanence. That is the result of the present phase of experience. The next stage will undoubtedly include world wide social experimentation on Communist lines. The essential preliminary to that is the clearing of the intellectual atmosphere, the dawning, as always, of understanding from misunderstanding, and the recognition that the phenomena in the Eastern sky were harbingers of light.

CHAPTER III.

FROM LENIN TO HITLER.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago the only man in Europe who knew his own mind said to the little group of followers which history had significantly labelled Bolsheviks (for eventually they expressed the majority) : " Now let us commence to construct the Socialist State."

The emergence of the man Ulianoff from obscurity into the sphere of creation constitutes one of the greatest victories of war, just as the translation of a different figure from the obscenities of a beer cellar to the intoxications of destructive power constitutes the greatest recorded defeat of peace. The story of the sealed train, in which Kaiser Wilhelm transmitted Lenin, like a bacillus in a needle, into the body politic of Russia in order to destroy it, amounts, not only to irony at the expense of the wicked, but to a symbol of the way in which the forces of human aspiration do sometimes achieve articulation in the midst of disaster. The War, in which England, at least, depended for success on the loyalty of her people to the victims of treachery (in accordance with ideals now regarded as old fashioned), was eventually fought entirely by the people. And at the end it was claimed that the war had been fought for the people. Whatever the quantity of truth or falsity in that claim, certain it is that the war gave expression as never before to popular will, however blind or however enlightened ; and the changes which took place in Russia were only a violent illustration of the truth that dynastic history had ended and that the struggles of the future were to be fought among the conscious orders of the people and not merely by their unwilling bodies.

The last war succeeded in making the world dangerous for Democracy, because, all over the world, it brought that delicate

and difficult system to precocious fulfilment. Democracy, the only desirable system, is by its nature predestined to danger. That danger is at its greatest when Democracy suddenly looms into reality for masses of people who are not politically or ethically prepared for it. The course of the last war involved, not only in Russia, a vast emancipation, a virtual freeing of slaves on a scale unprecedented in history. In the backward countries (such is the potency of ideas) the standard of Freedom—admittedly not the average—was *at least* as high as the standard among the most progressive. And, among all advances, that which overshadowed all others was the most modern one—the advance that was desirable for the progressive as well as for the least developed among the nations—namely, the giving to individuality, to liberty, and to equality, of an economic reality as well as a legal significance under old laws. The consequent emphasis or over emphasis of the economic purpose of government was as dangerous in 1918 and subsequently, as when the Roman Emperors endeavoured to base the strength of their dynasties on bread and circuses.

Lenin came to fulfil the demands of an age that knew only economic demands, an age that was temporarily oblivious of other factors in the psychology of society. Himself a profound enough philosopher to know the limitations of his system, he was also imbued with the fanaticism of the visionary, who sees through logical objections to the consequences of a social transformation which will make those objections irrelevant. He also understood, and in himself expressed, the need of the fanatical reformer for simplicity, indeed for over-simplicity, for exaggeration, and for extravagances of revolutionary exhortation. In his hands, therefore, the striking but incomplete philosophy which is Marxism, was a weapon. Consequently it was not given to Lenin to perfect Socialist doctrine. From the beginning he was compelled to ignore the truth, of which neither Marx nor himself was completely unaware, that the economic needs of the human being are the means to the achievement of an individuality and a dignity which are lost, if, and so long as, economic needs are regarded as

ends in themselves. For, if that last error is made, then the theorist of economism is a victim of the same blindness that afflicts the down-trodden masses that cannot think for themselves because they have insufficient food.

Yet, in constructing his Socialist state, Lenin was compelled by the exigencies of the situation to a preoccupation with the anxieties of a poor man's world—made poorer by the richness of its aims. In further consequence he was forced in his policy to ignore, even to under-estimate, the more sophisticated virtues and problems of Democracy. He was neutral between Democracy and Militarism. He was forced to regard Democratic institutions as an epiphenomenon of Capitalism, and to condemn the religion and ethics of the West as an "opiate for the masses," inducing in them a torpor from which they had to be aroused. He realized also, as the Western world was dimly realizing, the impossibility of any society whose economic organization was not internationally planned. But the iron logic of the Russian Revolution transformed that realization into the narrow conception of international class war. When, later, Lenin (and the clearer minded Trotsky) realized the remoteness of this anarchy from practical politics, Russia fell back (and the Western world contrived to push Russia back) into a nationalism as rigid as any in a Balkanized Europe. And they left the Comintern to beat its ineffectual luminous red wings in the void that should be filled with human intelligence.

Social doctrines are most easily conveyed; seem, indeed, to be transmitted by a certain telepathy across the nations. Ideas emanating from one nation seem to crystallize, in formulae, the needs and aspirations of people in other nations. There are abundant recent and terrible examples of this. Similarly, in the twixt-war years, Russian doctrine, no longer bearded and sinister, like nineteenth century anarchy, but beautiful and inadequately draped, and distressingly unsophisticated, either seduced or horrified the inhabitants of a world that needed the guidance and discipline of exact thought. Loose thinking has since proved itself to be at least as dangerous as loose living: and one of the most distressing features of recent anarchy has been the facility

with which unbridled viciousness has adopted the masquerade roles of romantic ideals.

That the obsession of the world with economism caused the complete misunderstanding by England, in particular, of European affairs is now a commonplace. To this misunderstanding and to this obsession must be attributed the long continued estrangement of Russia from the Councils of the West. The results of that estrangement are too well known to need elaboration. But in addition to international misunderstanding, economism has much to answer for in the domestic affairs of many nations. The Socialist ideology (quite different from Socialist ideals) descended on Europe at a time when class differences were being bridged by rising wages and cheaper goods. Averages were rising, if standards were falling. The rich were realizing the relative unimportance of much of their wealth, and the poor enjoyed more of the essentials of good living.

Yet, according to psychological precedent, as the gap diminished between classes class-consciousness became more intense. And when the tides of prosperity receded there jutted out from social consciousness class hostilities. Socialist doctrine, descending on this world, disproved its own postulate of the unimportance of ideas. The class conflict was made by ideas into a reality. Moreover, the ground was prepared for economic civil war precisely by the successes of socialism, not by its failure to be accepted. The technique of collectivism was achieved, and when it was made available to the exponents of nationalism and militarism and the factions which are gangsterism, the result was National Socialism. The disciples of Lenin had unintentionally created the Totalitarian State.

The logic of Fascism is new, but the psychology of Fascism is old. The New Order has been rightly described as neither new nor an order, but old anarchy. Fascism is tyranny. It exists before Democracy, as it exists at the end of Democracy—whenever a great materialist can bribe a materially minded world with material benefits and the satisfaction of the lowest instincts and desires. Fascism, in its modern form, with the technical

equipment of the bureaucratic state, and the specious theory of totalitarian Nationalism, is tyranny in modern dress, tyranny using a technique that Socialistic Democracy has created, tyranny appealing to needs and demands of which Democracy has mad people conscious, and using (this is the most sinister featu ambitious means of state control which were instituted for, an originally justified by, nobler purposes. New means of communication, like wireless telegraphy, which enrich the people enable the government to rule more directly, and—this is the danger—more efficiently. And such successes have been consequent upon the centralization of modern machinery, and the perfection of organization and communications, that the idea of central direction loses its mediate significance and comes to be regarded as a permanent political purpose.

The Socialist system is shot through with the dangers of totalitarian logic. The category of totality, of "all-importance," of "absolute essentiality," comes into operation whenever a dialectical process, whenever the logic of purpose, is taken too seriously. If the dialectic operates destructively, on institutions like the state, the family, some religious belief, or any social habit, and if one takes too seriously the proposition that these are the manifestations of old fashioned and useless purposes, then the way is open to a complete scepticism, and an anarchic attitude in politics, ethics and the world of values generally. If, on the other hand, one seizes (as one is likely to seize in the midst of scepticism) upon some purpose that can be made to account fo the whole of history, then the category of totality tends to attac to any dictate of obedience that appeals to that consciousness o purpose. If the economic welfare of the masses happens to be the purpose, then they must follow its mediate dictates even to their destruction. If it happens to be the military glorification of a self purifying race, then all the iniquities incidental to its achievement are vested with the illusion of moral, where they lack the sanction of physical, necessity.

Totalitarianism in the State is the political revolutionary means become an end. This is a familiar characteristic of the

political consequences of revolutions good and bad. Thus the good English revolution, the good French revolution, the good Russian revolution, have all resulted in some short or long period of tyranny. And the last mentioned gave an example, and a lesson in technique, to the leaders of the purely vicious (because purely military) revolutions of Italy, Germany, Spain and the Balkans. These saw the excesses that were committed in Russia, and, with the plausible excuse of exorcising the Russian danger, they bettered the Russian instruction. They also had, among their material, people who had learned, from the Socialists, theoretically to over-value economic purposes. These were easy to persuade of the preferability of immediate economic acquisitions to eventual economic harmony. The Military State offered a better investment for hopes than did the vague prospectus of the classless, stateless, society. If it is true that Marx inverted for his own purposes the logic of Hegel, now the exponents of a degraded Hegelianism have avenged their master by over-turning Marxianism to its own destruction.

The truth is that Totalitarianism is the body of Socialism without its soul. The Communists presented to the world ideals, which, being economically stated, became easily mis-stated; gave to the world a political method which was easily prostituted; and gave to the world an example on which the most charitable comment is that its bad features were more acceptable to the world, and more easily copied and applied, than were the good features. Indeed there is some justification for the view that in Russia itself, where Socialism was militant if not triumphant, the successors of Lenin were better exponents of despotic means than of idealistic or of human ends. There was evidence there of similar humourless fanaticism, of (in a lesser degree) similar bureaucratic inhumanity, similar cynical disregard for life, to that which, on a larger scale, through the agency of wickeder people, has restored central Europe to its pristine barbarity.

One must make all allowances for the exigencies of revolution, and in the light of those allowances one must contrast the democratic ideal. Democracy takes a more humorous view of

history, procrastinates considerably, but avoids hysteria. Accordingly, Democracy resists the temptation to let the end justify the sacrifice of the values which are the means. Though its tenets are remarkably vague in contrast to those of Marxism, Democracy does appear to rest firmly on what others think is a superstitious veneration for individual human life and happiness. These present ends Democracy is reluctant to sacrifice even to the most glamorous ideals of universal well being. Even in times of the direst emergency, Democracy is intensely reluctant to impose by force on its subjects restrictions as to liberty, or laws endangering their lives. And those laws being enacted are expressly emergency laws justified only because the very existence of the commonwealth is in issue, and subject to the implied undertaking that when the emergency has passed those laws will be abrogated.

This expresses the ideals of Democracy, and, if Democracy falls short of these ideals, it is because in modern times Democracy has absorbed but not digested the economic interpretation of its political functions. England and France have been in a measure totalitarian because their idealists have been obsessed with economism and have failed, therefore, to resist as vigorously as they might the aggressions, in their own states, of purely economic factions. Hence the ill-omened synthesis of selfishness and generosity in the one-party state. And, externally, the confusion is echoed, for not the least of the unfortunate legacies of Socialism has been a failure on the part of Democrats to distinguish the economic purposes, a failure to analyse the economic justifications, that have emanated from two such different regimes as those of Lenin and of Hitler, "alien of end and of aim. Adverse, each from the other, heaven-high, hell-deep, removed."

CHAPTER IV.

DANGEROUS FOR DEMOCRACY.

TO say that Socialism, or Communism, is dangerous for Democracy is to state a half-truth. Democracy, like the mature human intelligence, like civilization itself, is delicately balanced and dangerous to itself. There are within it tendencies which, if over developed, will destroy it, just as there are, in the human body and mind, forces which if uncontrolled lead to dissolution.

The tendency of Democracy to express all the purposes of the human community carries with it the danger of over expression of the less controllable purposes. The economic interest of individuals, or of groups, is not the least dangerous of these purposes, for economic interests in the modern world, hag-ridden by economic pressure, absorb more of the human mind than they are entitled to, cause, therefore, a loss of balance, an obsession with the immediate, which prevents people, and the society that expresses them, from doing justice to the wider purposes of individuals or nations respectively.

Unfortunately, Democracy has developed piecemeal, not without struggle, and emphasis has always been laid on its mechanism, on the expanding franchise, on representative government, on the legal safeguards, such as they are, against irresponsibility, on the checks and balances. In this way Democracy becomes identified, in popular thinking, with Representative Government, with the representation of specific interests that have not always been articulate, rather than with the merits or defects of what is represented. Yet, in all the struggles that brought about Representative Government, the moral strength of its progressive advocates consisted always in the moral claim, or the moral superiority, of elements in society which at any given stage were unexpressed. Thus in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England, when Democracy

was further from its triumphs than it is now, no responsible thinker confused Democracy with the expression of sectional interests through the mechanism of party, without reference to the objective merits of whatever was being advocated. On the other hand the party machine in its rudimentary stage was recognized as only a means for the attainment of Democratic Laws and Institutions. Nowadays, parties, like governments, overshadow with their bulk their original purposes, and identify themselves with the State, with Society itself.

If institutions are regarded as no more than their mechanism, and if society is regarded only as a resultant of mechanical forces including these, then there is scope for a theory of politics, and of history, which conceives political life as the progressive expression of wider and wider sections, culminating in a universal parochialism. An economic interpretation of history and of politics is one instance of such a mechanical theory of political expression. True as this theory is to account for many facts that were ignored in earlier and cruder theories, itself requires now to be restated in a wider context, just as the once satisfactory mechanics of Newton require to be restated so as to account for the phenomena of the electro magnetic field.

If human beings were bundles of primitive instincts and conditioned reflexes, expressing a perpetual demand for nutrition and cognate desiderata, their public life would be so cast that a good political system would be definable as one that gives nutrition to more units, and a bad political system as one that gives nutrition to less. Nobody really believes such a theory of society when it is stated that way. But, if one adopts the standpoint of the oppressed masses, some form or other of the fallacy is easy to accept. In reality what the oppressed masses require is a freedom to act in emancipation from harsh necessity. Harsh necessity has been, indeed, an incentive to a social pressure that has produced emancipation. But to make that pressure the essential principle of politics is only to restore to it an importance against which the bulk of history is a protest. And if political life is conceived and accepted as the continued expression of economic interests,

clearly no emancipation can ever be more than superficial.

In truth, Democracy has always felt itself to be more than a degree of expression for economic forces. Democracy is confused with representationalism, because representationalism is a very important mechanism in Democracy, or a very important nerve system in the social organism. And the confusion is easy because technique is easier to grasp than principle, and because, psychologically, we find it easy to ignore our familiar background. We tend to forget that Democracy, in fact, has always contained, and been animated by, principles of morality and justice which are more than resultants of material forces. These principles, being always present, are taken for granted among the civilized, and forgotten. Only when the machinery of Democracy overworks itself, only when the organism is strained, only when Democracy is in danger, do people seek for the imponderables which distinguish Democracy from superficially similar systems. Precisely so does the healthy sceptic or cynic fail to believe in more than his body, and eventually despairs of finding in his own consciousness and diminishing vitality more than an after glow from the smouldering slag heap of his indiscriminate clay.

The materialist is obsessed with the power of the forces against which he fights. Therefore, in voicing the oppression of those who would never achieve liberty and life except by their own brute force, and in condemning the failure of the machinery of emancipation to emancipate, the thinkers of Communism put their faith in a certain brutal primitive necessity, giving an ordered pattern to what was only accidental selection. And in practical politics they condemned the machinery of Democracy, which was all they saw of it, as the expression of one moment in the evolution of that necessity; as the expression of lesser, but no less brutal, forces which would inevitably be eclipsed in the shadow of darker, stronger, larger, fates.

And to this extent they were justified: that the world in modern times has been obsessed with social crudenesses, with the habit of mechanically grasping whatever can be grasped. If the Communists were untrue to the only aims which justify

people in dedicating themselves to the service of the masses, untrue, that is, to the ideal of a larger and richer life to be enjoyed by all, so, too, those few who lived in the vineyards of Democracy were untrue to the ideals of that system, because, in enslaving others, they also enslaved themselves, and their freed-men, in a psychological servility to pre-occupations and habits which only expressed the cruder aspects of their unachieved selves.

If, however, the history of this age is interpreted psychologically rather than physically, and if the truth be accepted that there is a level of conscious behaviour at which men can emancipate or can enslave themselves, then it will be realized that the problems of politics are not solved by economic solutions, or by the mechanical alteration of laws and institutions. And there are forces at the level of the economic which seem to be evidence of this. Only, let it be said, an economic and social machinery more widely conceived than the present may give more scope to the better psychological forces than are at present given. Meanwhile, Democracy stands in two dangers ; the psychological danger that in its present form it is degenerating into an acquisitive habit system of which its laws and institutions are machinery, and its ideals empty ornaments ; and a second psychological danger that the rise to power, inside and outside Democracy, of elements hitherto repressed will, instead of emancipating society, merely enslave it with a different enslavement, an enslavement to the many rather than to the few, to the impersonal rather than to the personal. And the development, inside and outside Democracy, of a machine geared to the interests of the many rather than the few, has already, as we have seen, lent itself to exploitation by individuals, and by groups, who represent the worst constituents of human psychology, and who threaten to extend, by force, persuasion, and example, the domain of that brute which is in the human being over the whole extent of human life and the human mind.

To a world which possesses some conception of social purpose, and—more important—which possesses some machinery and some technique for the expression of diverse interests, Socialism,

or Communism, may prove more dangerous and destructive than it was in decadent Czarist Russia where its task was thoroughly to destroy in order completely to recreate. In Russia the class war was a creative struggle, because it ended in the victory of one class. More accurately, a group of leaders, intellectuals for the most part, succeeded in restating the law and the constitution so as to give expression to the ultimate interests of the mass of the people, and to universalize the status of worker as the political status par excellence. In that successful struggle most of the forms, conventions, and values of Bourgeois society went to the wall. But in modern Europe and America, the effort that is being made, and resisted, is the praiseworthy, ambitious, and all but impossible endeavour to synthesise the socialist purpose into a wider Democracy of which Socialism is really part. In this effort Democracy manifests all the defects that flow from its merits ; and the only merits that it accepts from Socialism may prove to be defects.

If Socialism and Democracy are the poles of a dialectical synthesis, producing a wider Socialism, or a deeper Democracy, certainly at the present stage they express only antithesis. The paradoxical reason for this is that Democracy already includes so much of Socialism in form, and so little in spirit,. On the other hand Socialism as a separate movement may be said to enjoy a Democratic spirit without the support of Democratic forms. In Modern Democracies we see the bureaucratic technique of Socialism concretized and crystallized within the forms of representative government. But these, being mechanical, have shown themselves to be capable of serving other purposes than the social, of being reduced to the formal aspect of economic functions which do not express the needs of the masses or of the individual as such. And in so far as he is part of, and geared to, this unrepresentative representationalism, the Socialist leader inside Democracy is a sectionalist, if not a careerist. Consequently modern Europe has been productive of faction-leaders and compromisers ; at the best, of Kerenskys rather than of Lenins.

Kerensky, the leader of the first 1917 revolution, the Social

Democratic revolution, is the prototype of ambitious Democratic idealism and of all the Democratic weaknesses. At once réformative of institutions and conservative of values, a Kerensky can succeed, may eventually succeed, in a fundamentally idealistic country such as England, where the institutions are flexible and capable of being reanimated by the spirit which helped to create them. But he is always in danger of submitting to those other influences which can still find expression in political technique. He is in danger always of being caught in the machinery of superficially Democratic sectional government.

In Russia, in 1917, Kerensky fell beneath the hammer that destroyed the rickety representative machinery which he took over from the Czar's private museum of political devices. But in the subsequent history of Europe, the Kerenskys have been all too successful. Europe has been over stocked with well meaning Social Democrats, with Bruenings, with Blums, with MacDonalds, and with even more easily forgotten Spaniards and Italians, who endeavoured to socialize their countries and only succeeded in sectionalizing them. Their successors have been adventurers of varying degrees of benevolence or malevolence. Primo de Rivera, was, perhaps, the least nocuous and the least successful of these. The immense (or is it inflated ?) figure of Mussolini represents a greater success for that influential sectionalism, disguised in the easily fitting garb of Nationalism and Patriotism (the traditional camouflage of scoundrels), which took over the machinery of collectivism (sabotaging incidentally the machinery of representative government) and made it the technical instrument of Fascism or National Socialism. This particular colossus, this peculiarly Italian edition of Daniel's brazen fronted giant with feet of clay, bestrides the gap in time between the wave of abortive, but well meaning, Social experiment inside Democracy, and the wave of brutal, racketeering, reaction which swept away Democracy and swept Hitler and his gangsters into power.

The richer nations, with less desperate, more human, populations, which had not felt the need for Leninism, escaped

also the anarchic consequences of Kerenskyism that manifested themselves in Italy, Spain and Germany. But they did not necessarily fare better for that. The failure of the good, the collapse of France, is, like the fall of Lucifer, greater than the fall of those that were never angels. We in England are capable of experiencing some melancholy satisfaction in this fall, because, in a strange way, the tactical defeat turned out to be a strategic advantage, and the moral blow proved a salutary lesson. But that does not mitigate the enormity of the tragedy, of which the most appalling feature consists in the responsibility therefor of Democratic institutions become irresponsible.

The collapse of France constitutes dangerously plausible propaganda for Totalitarianism. Here, says the sceptic, was Freedom, freedom of thought, freedom of religion, freedom from want and, for the vast majority, freedom from fear. The result—public indifference and private indulgence. And the Lavals of France, exponents, themselves, of plutocracy, and of the spirit that filled the mansions of Paris with machine-guns that would have been better employed in the trenches, are able, to cite their own warnings, and the graver warnings of Poincare and Tardieu, against a public policy which reduced the week to 35 hours and the Maginot Line to two thirds of its proper length, so that the people should enjoy themselves. How much better, they urge, the dedication of the same people to a policy which, admittedly, deprives them of the more elementary freedoms, but consecrates them to an ideal of Service to unstated masters.

That the kind of service to which the Fascist or Collaborationist would dedicate the lower orders of society does not bear investigation needs no saying here. But the fact remains that the process of socialization permeating French Democracy such as it was, in the somewhat mercenary context of French psychology, proved too great a strain on the system. Psychologically, the class war was too real in France, and brought out the worst characteristics of a population attenuated and cynicised in the debilitating aftermath of glory. Also the French Constitution was not politically robust. France, which acquired,

through Montesquieu, a premature fulfilment, in its institutions, of English political experiment, possessed a legislature calculated to restrict government rather than to create government. A Chamber in which the individual member had a financial initiative lent itself to invasion by sectionalist "delegates", expert in the mechanics of log rolling and responsible only to the narrow interests for which they haggled. Whereas English log rolling rolled governments into power, French log rolling was only capable of rolling governments out of power. Obviously, then, Socialist programmes of any sort in France were likely to be factitious. The political status of the French civil service made easy the transition from petty faction to large scale public intrigue.

On the other hand, England, in which Democracy exists, yet finds itself Despotic, was able to maintain, through its theory of ministerial responsibility (which accompanies a docile and irresponsible civil service), at least the elements of continuous administration, even though that administration expressed quite unpraiseworthy interests. More Fascistic than France in form, England has so far been saved the worse degree of Fascism that supervenes on Chaos, and has, to some degree, been redeemed by the renewal, in people and government alike, of a high consciousness of responsibility to the ideal of Freedom. It remains to be seen whether the United States, whose constitution is nearer to the French than to the English form, will receive its future Socialist developments as smoothly as England, or whether they will suffer the " Labour Pains " which proved fatal to the third French Republic.

America is not without its idealism ; one does not know how deep or how shallow. Perhaps, when the test comes, the Carnegies and Rockefellers will forget their sentiment and remember only the machine-guns and the tear gas with which they established their empires over the workers of Pittsburgh. That is matter for speculation. Meanwhile, it is all too clear that the birth of Socialism in Europe has not been an easy travail for Democracy, and we shall see that the resultant confusionalism has been responsible for the most fantastic misadventures in international affairs.

CHAPTER V.

ECONOMISM AND THE CONTINUITIES OF HISTORY.

SOCIALIST tendencies, as they seep through the body politic, have an effect suggestive of those drugs which kill or cure. Not that Socialism, or Communism, is unnecessarily violent in its proper demands and the stimulus which it gives to political life. Reasonable principles of emancipation can hardly fail to improve the health of society. But we receive them these days in a concentrated form, and with the constituents badly mixed. It may even be true that the coating of the reformer's pill contains some poison which is at once unnecessary and dangerous.

Socialist tendencies, and sympathies, seem to have developed, as we have seen, first as part or as result of, later as a causal factor in, a period spirit of economism; by which I mean the development, to the exclusion of all else, of the purely economic interests and activities, and the concomitant belief that the social frame of reference contains only economic terms. What the human needs, desires, and interests are that condition the existence of any economic relationship is not inquired into, is taken for granted. Commercial contract is the essence of our time. It forms a habit system for lives and the sole subject matter of government; and, since economic activity is becoming socially all embracing, the political system—now political economy in a new sense—comes to absorb, where once it only impinged upon, the domain of private life.

This economic obsession is the characteristic behaviour of a world which, because of its habit system, of which this obsession is part, has been unconscious of the psychological implications of what American writers might term this "fixation." That

habit system was created by that greatest, and most revolutionary, of revolutions, the Industrial Revolution. This freed the world, and also crowded it; and exerted such a pressure on thought that the very revolt against industrial abuses took an economistic form. Hence the modern doctrine of Socialism, according to which the world is a long enduring market, rather like Darwin's jungle or the London Stock Exchange, in which only the roughest of merchants are likely to survive, until, from the last and strongest type of competitor, there is evolved the uncompetitive king of the street.

This doctrine is worth considering in abstraction from any particular movement or theory, because, and to the extent that, it implies an assumption which is common ground between modern men and politicians of all types and parties. The fundamental assumption that life is wholly economic is nowadays almost uncontroversial. As it becomes explicit this assumption becomes more dangerous to society than when it was only implicit. We have seen that the tendency,and the technique which expresses it, as well as the belief, have rendered the internal affairs of nations difficult and dangerous. Moreover, by reason of an organic process in society, which the Socialists do not explain, doctrines that were first held by rebels become orthodox, just as the lower classes tend to become upper classes. And where there is no bitterness of conflict beliefs are shared.

Thus, in the dangerously neutral field that was the affairs of other nations, the spokesmen of Capitalistic countries were prepared to make generous concessions to any political demand that took an economic form, especially those demands that gave to some individuals a reciprocal economic advantage. Therefore, after the world was parcelled out in 1919 into self-determined political units, and it became clear that the formula of self-determination was so vague as to give rise to infinite disputes over political purposes and political boundaries, the great personalities of the world were content to consider nothing but economic merits, and to assume that, from moment to moment, any particular customer would probably be right. The

consequence was that, when dangerous psychological forces developed and persisted with the aid of economic camouflage, interested, and disinterested, spectators failed to see that evils were growing in the world which no economic formula could classify or help to diagnose, and which no economic technique could cure or exorcise. It was left, accordingly, to the genius of Hitler, a creature expert in the use of economic camouflage, to demonstrate to whomsoever it concerned that the economic interpretation of modern history, at least, is wrong because, for him, it was right.

II.

It must be understood that the last war, which called forth from Western society an industrial effort unparalleled in previous history, left the world over-conscious of its economic structure, just as in fatigue or illness the human being is over conscious of his body. Subsequently, this age has been dominated by the strains and stresses of its economic life, and suffused with an economic obsession of which materialistic theory is the rationalization. This psychology and this logic, operating in modern society, have been productive of domestic progress and domestic dangers in the groups which are nations. In international affairs the economic theory, even more than economic practice, has been responsible for a wrong perspective and a disastrous failure to discern those danger-signs of politics which, in the past being understood, have enabled statesmen to guide international affairs towards tranquillity.

The economic restatement of politics is, of course, a natural and well grounded intellectual result of that process which has brought to articulation the masses, the raw material of society; and the theory is not without intellectual merits.

Up to a point that line of thought was justified which culminated in Marx, and which substituted for the forms and panoplies of

feudal historians the less spectacular realism of the biologist and the economist. These gave a new meaning to commonwealth as they searched below the paraphernalia and pageantries of the dynastic; and as they explored the life of the people that lay below it, they rightly imported a new emphasis into political economy. The change of emphasis was justified, but, like so many of the great scientific discoveries, it was overstated in dogma, and its logic was elaborated into a metaphysic where there was only room for metaphor. Unfortunately these exaggerations came as weapons into the armoury of one of the few intellectual movements which have guided history rather than followed it; and the economic interpretation of history has since become a force of a magnitude which itself has denied to any manifestation of intellect.

To a degree the economic interpretation of history is correct and important. Certainly, over the long perspectives, and down the vistas of human events, the most striking land-marks are the changes in the basic equipment of the human being, his body and his body politic, and not the ephemeral glamour of individual experiences and occasional ideas. The common man (some have called him the economic man), an abstraction and an aggregate of the apparently unimportant, looms larger in world affairs seen in a context of centuries, than does the hero or the genius who dominates a decade. But the valuation is comparative. The common man owes much to the so called super man; and though the super man finds his opportunity for expression, and his subject, in the needs of the common man, he cannot be said to be a mere historical shadow on the surface of something more substantial. Certainly Angelo and Columbus expressed in different ways the material requirements of their age as well as the dictates of their own genius; but there have been ages of unexpressed aspiration which did not realize the angelic, and periods when, in the flood of barbaric energy, there was no one to send forth an exploratory dove.

Others have criticized the materialistic interpretation of history, and shown that it does not account for many of the inspirations,

for good or for evil, that have possessed human beings. There have been periods when life has moved against the economic current, as it did during the middle ages, under the influence of religion, and as it may be said to move in those parts of the world which, even now, are dedicated to profane but uneconomic theophanies, to the service of a man who is not the spirit of man that others worship, and who is equally not the economic man. But, taking for granted the criticism that shows this interpretation of history to be unhistoric, it remains to observe that it does not express the economy which itself has been instrumental in creating. The values which economy takes for granted remain unresolved as surds in the economic equation. Economics assumes the existence of demands and supplies; and does not inquire into the social facts which originate and change them. And further, allowing the possibility that the moral efficiency of any theory—and this in particular—can be explained away as an epiphenomenon—in which case it does not matter whether anyone believes it or not—one has only to follow out the implications of the theory to see that it leads to its own reversal, if not to one of those mysterious contradictions that inspire a higher synthesis.

For, according to this interpretation, or misinterpretation, of history, the intellectual manifestations of any age are related as effect to cause, or as event to condition, with the material stresses and trends of human life in that period. If that is true, then it follows that the economic interpretation of history is itself the accident or consequence of economic conditions, and that, in a different age, a different theory may prove more expressive of human life, and who shall call such a theory false? As an argument, this may be open to the suspicion that is directed, rightly, against all purely logical arguments, and there are undoubtedly available subtleties of logic that may deprive it of force. But if the history of the age be considered dispassionately, and if that experience is accepted which teaches that there are uneconomic passions in the world, and if the materialistic logic of the nineteenth century is contrasted with the differently

material, and infra-economic, psychology of the twentieth century, then it is arguable that the economic account of life was the temporary expression of an age of economic adventure, and completely inappropriate to an age which has, at once, aspired above the economic, and fallen back below it into the depths of a mephitic past.

III.

If it be realized that the economic determination of thought is a true psychological fact in some periods and not in others, and if this more critical theory is followed as a guiding thread through the mazes of modern history, the traveller will understand at once the importance of the theory, its inadequacy, and the fact that this philosophic anachronism has been responsible, at least in part, for the confusions of this age.

Under the influence of the theory, and in the atmosphere created by its propagators, the thinkers of the world, and the millions who thought with them (or thought they thought with them) failed to discern the real characteristics of the times they were entering and the future which they were helping to create. In particular the doctrinaire extravagances that have become part of popular thinking, (and, indeed, have appeared truer as economic problems became more acute), caused the leaders and followers of western civilization to lose sight of certain continuities of European history, to lose touch with certain well grounded realities, which only became revealed when the functions of modern materialism broke up into political ethical forms. These the Talleyrands and Metternichs—the realists who flourished before the new realism—would have experienced no difficulty in recognising for what they were.

The whole tragedy of three decades consists in the nemesis which follows the success of an idea. The progressive development of economic life, the articulation of economic needs, the

integration of economic organization, the enthusiastic recognition that politics have become economics, combined in human experience to make the world receptive to a system of thought which ignored the uneconomic categories. Those who feared the anti-individual trends of economism, and those who looked to it for salvation, were alike in thinking that the problems of the world were economic only; between them, they exhaustively expressed two phases of a predominantly economic period of history. But in the moment of the triumph of economism, when economics seemed to have conquered war, and was bidding fair to conquer peace, it became clear to those who wished to see (unfortunately that meant nobody) that economic technique and organization only expressed the surface of the world, just as the human epidermis, of which the humans are most intensely conscious, only constitutes the surface of the body.

So there followed an age to which economic thinking was inadequate; the more inadequate because economic routine causes the world to move automatically in helpless habit forms. If new forms were sought to be created, they took the dangerous form of international economic agreements and intrigues—and the greedy had "cartel blanc." And while the best elements in the world were suffering an entropy, and an apathy to the ethical levels which they could not recapture having lost, there burst upon the world, from that part of it which had degenerated most rapidly, the cruel realization that man cannot live by bread alone, and that many of those that possess bread in abundance have not forgotten their atavistic taste for blood.

To future generations modern materialism may well be academically interesting as an accident of industrialism, but to us it is a serious industrial accident; and there is tragic, not merely ironic, form in this story of a truth which became an exaggeration, and led the world into intellectual and emotional extravagances, and contributed, as a venial sin, to catastrophe and purgation by suffering. Yet in the history of the world, few cycles are more significant, few processes more vital, few catastrophes more promising of ultimate good than this. For in that

over developed tendency which has facilitated degeneration, in that thinking which has been so easily perverted, there is found an element of irreversible change, and the recognition of an unforgettable truth. This Economism, this Socialism, this Communism, with all its exaggerations expresses some underlying reality, and is as important in the modern world as most of the changes in emphasis through which the individual has achieved some fulfilment.

If account is taken of the blessings which the modern man enjoys in the ethical and political spheres, and if in that catalogue one counts the sense of importance and reality which man owes to the monotheistic religions, the scope for expression which has been won for him as a prize by the leaders of political revolutions, the content given to this experience by the resources that discovery and organization have put at his disposal, then one must count as well this new conception of the importance of the previously unimportant, and the movement (inspired by this thought) which has attempted to make man's responsibility, man's freedom. and man's scope, more real by making all the elements of humanity participants in the resources of the world. This has aimed at emancipating him from the limits of his own weakness, and the overwhelming advantages accumulated to his detriment by the strength and fortune of others.

In the history of progress, or social change, the socialistic development is something which having been done cannot be undone. Its changes constitute additions to be postulates of politics. Politics under Socialism becomes conscious of a purpose which, having adopted, it cannot abandon. These changes have come about peaceably as well as by violence. Of its violences, the picturesque, extravagant, and blood-thirsty Russian revolution is noteworthy, and will remain noteworthy, for having established in one country at least a political system in which economic participation by the people is an axiom. For that it is significant. But this significance should not be allowed to obscure, as it has obscured, the truth that Russia, for example, is still a political entity with problems of authority and obedience, problems of

policy, internal and external, military problems and diplomatic problems, which cannot be reduced to the economic without remainder, and which entitle it to objective consideration in some degree of abstraction from its internal organization which, though not totally irrelevant, must rank as a relatively independent variable in political ethics.

The weakness of a system with underlying economism is that the differences of economic form and interest give rise to narrower sectionalism than ever went before. Economically stated differences seem worse than political—and overshadow political dangers. Now while it is true that economic facts like living standards and price levels are important causal factors in contemporary political history, they do not exclusively determine the course of politics, especially international politics. And a profounder lesson is this, that the varieties of materialism are infinite. In the description of materially minded nations, a description of the state as socialistic or communistic is not enough. There are at least two nations in Europe whose economy is highly collectivized, whose economic problems have been a considerable part of their internal politics, but which, having absorbed the postulate of economic participation into their systems, have yet developed political features different in spirit from the Russian, if not strikingly different in superficial form. Only when Europe broke up along lines clearer to the politician than to the economist was the change revealed, and the truth that the materialism of Germany and Italy was different from Russian materialism; that when herd instincts came to be expressed as the subject matter of politics, the herd instinct of Germany was different from the herd instinct of Russia; just as the wolf pack is different from the human community, though both are gregarious.

Because, at " material " times, the Russian system of materialism was misunderstood, through the faults of West Europeans and East Europeans alike, the Western world continued unconscious of what truths were being pronounced, and became oblivious of the implications of the materialistic political system which itself had developed. England forgot its own taste for

egalitarianism, developed through a century of industrial experience, and over-estimated at once the danger to its institutions from the new example, and the difference between the new institutions and the old. This state of mind served to make those dangers greater and to aggravate the differences. Similarly at the time of the French Revolution (as we have seen) England forgot its reform in reacting against Revolution. Then a reform of the franchise was postponed for nearly fifty years, because a greater reform had been achieved elsewhere by violence, and liberties which had made Revolution in England unnecessary were so suppressed that only the regimentation of the country in war prevented the outbreak of anarchy. So, here, a process of progressive industrial reorganization, and an improved distribution of wealth, came to an end because of the fears provoked by violences in a country where violence was really necessary.

There is no need to recapitulate here the story of how England and France, in order to avoid what they thought was a bad example, fell into the arms of the real enemy. They accepted Russian economism sufficiently to adopt a bad economistic standpoint. Hence a policy based on false formulae and resulting in a false balance of power. The good balance of power, which crystallized in 1914 and then made our military triumphs possible, was abandoned in favour of a newer, older, and worse theory. The forces of economic reaction made possible the reversion of British policy to the old imperialistic days when Russia was a danger to British control of the Mediterranean, the days before the inheritance by Central Europe of the dangerous and disastrous legacy of the Bourbons and Hapsburgs. If England has committed in war the error of fighting again the battles of 1914, she made the mistake in peacetime of preparing for the Crimean War.

Because the continuities of European history were forgotten British statesmen (if that is the proper word) completely overlooked the obvious possibility of the Russo-German partition of Poland—and found great difficulty in controlling their own hostility to Russia when the leaders of that country finally alienated public opinion in the West by a far from fortunate expedition into

Finland, and a liquidation of the minor nationalities of the Baltic. These events could only be justified by the recognition that the period of economic idealism had ceased and that political history was once again on the march. Eventually the inner necessities of German aggressive strategy readjusted the balance of thought. What remains now is that with the continuities of history re-established, and with the super and infra economic valuations once more in control of the public mind, that mind should recognize the similarities of social structure where they exist, should cease to regard Western Democracy and East European Communism as different worlds, but seeing now the realities of politics made clearer in the pathology of Europe, rethink in the light of a wider experience the social problems of the new age.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW POSTULATE.

COMMUNISM still lives in the shadow of an antiquated cult or an outmoded theory, because Communism in its practical form is very near in time to Communism as a battle of ideas. Thanks to the development of modern communications, thanks to the acceleration of modern changes, and the enormous integration of the modern industrial system, which is the proper matrix of collectivist reforms, it happens that the speculations of the nineteenth century have crystallized into institutions more rapidly than ideas have ever realized themselves before. Whereas monotheism, and humanism, and individualism, and all the other constituents of Liberalism and Democracy, existed as ideas for centuries before they seeped into institutions and conditioned the habits of mankind, it was the fate of Marx and the modern prophets to see their dreams beginning to be realized even in their life time. With the possible exception of Plato's misadventures at Syracuse, and Isaiah's attempt to reform Judea, there appears to be no precedent in history for the experience of Marx, whose melancholy privilege it was, after the siege of Paris, to write the obituary of his own Republic.

Because of the proximity in time of the practical critique to the academic cult, the exponents of Communism still tend to regard it as dogmatic rather than as a system of laws. Moreover, because they do not realize the degree to which socialist ideals have effectually permeated the age, they still regard themselves as the advance guard of a new civilization marching under a revolutionary banner; and they are reluctant to believe that, while they were painfully marching, history on the wheels of warfare overtook them on the road. And some of them arrived at their destination so late as to find another and different revolution in progress, with which they became hopelessly involved.

Communism has been a new and important doctrine, and has needed, in parts of the world, to harness to itself the forces which are revolution, because Communism, like the Libertarianism of revolutionary France, has been an endeavour to import a new postulate into politics. In an age even more crowded than the eighteenth century the Communists realized that the abolition of tyranny and privilege was insufficient to liberate mankind, and that there was needed a further emancipation, an emancipation from those forces which the men of the eighteenth century thought were forces of freedom. Coercion having been abolished, the persuasions of money and property had generated new coercions. It was left to the Russian revolution (inspired by Marx) to demonstrate on a large scale the possibility of restating political society with the aid of economic postulates that the French revolutionaries had not seriously entertained.*

Because it was a postulate of politics that was in question, and not merely a principle, and not merely a specific grievance, Communism, in those parts of the world that could not conceive its message, entailed revolution and not merely reform. In so far as it entailed revolution it was, from the standpoint of Democracy (which is conservative of values) necessarily bad. Democracy recognizes minor revolts, calculated to preserve and defend ancient liberties and institutions; but does not condone, though itself is partly built upon, movements which invoke the arbitrament of violence with all its injustices. Thus England is prouder of 1688 than of 1649, though she owes infinitely more to 1649. 1688 was calculated to preserve liberties : without 1649 there would have been few liberties to preserve.

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*It is to be observed, however, that they considered it academically; and that Marx derives inspiration from a line of English and French thinkers, from Rousseau and Paine, to the hardly known but very percipient Saint-Simon. To all of these property was not sacrosanct. The " positivism " of most of these thinkers was reinforced in Marx by his own Hegelianism and by the economic formula extracted from Hegel by Feuerbach and others. From these joint sources Marx constructed the Industrial struggle for the means of production, etc. Needless to say, Marx's construction so overshadows his materials, that his claim to originality is unchallengeable.

Similarly, England and other sophisticated nations of Europe resisted the French revolution, though eventually they gained from it, and though their peoples were fundamentally sympathetic to it; and they resisted the Russian revolution, although its protagonists contended for nothing that was not acceptable in principle to the spirit of the age. Here the issue is complicated by the fact that the new postulate was not at first so evidently acceptable (or even familiar) to the majority of the West Europeans as twenty years of economic misfortune eventually revealed it to be. But it is noticeable that at all times there have not been wanting disinterested men, men of imagination, capable of seeing the justice latent beneath the welter of anarchy. In a fortunate age there are men of the giant mental stature of Charles James Fox; in a less fortunate age smaller minded, yet well enlightened, men, like our own Ramsay MacDonald; men willing, according to their moral capacity (which may be great or small), to bridge with sympathy the gap between revolutionary and conservator.

And here it is pertinent to observe that there have not been wanting, at various times, men so minded as to see justice in anarchic movements where no justice existed; for, be it remembered, there have been other revolutions which have also introduced new postulates into politics; postulates such as the destiny of the most brutal elements in a master race. They too were revolutionary notions, but the ultimate test of a revolution is whether the postulate to be introduced with violence is good or bad; and that is ultimately revealed in the course of the revolution itself.

Communism may be, nay, undoubtedly is, a better revolution than some other revolutions, but, rightly or wrongly, is still a revolution. The revolutionary atmosphere still colours it, and requires to be seen through before its doctrines are impartially judged. The suggestion here is that Communism is sufficiently well grounded in human traditions to dispense now with revolution; and to be able to tolerate impartiality, because it no longer needs the aid of fanaticism in order to retain its hold on the human mind. And when it is regarded impartially many of its extrav-

agances appear to be nothing more than a forceful statement of postulates breaking into recognition. Thus the dynamic aspect of Communist doctrine consists in the fervid advocacy of a programme which is compendiously described as a class war, including and resolving all other conflicts of authority, and resulting in the universal dictatorship of the proletariat. But this is only a strongly exaggerated way of saying that the government of the world cannot in the long run exist without reference to the majority of its population. In so far as the needs of the world are expressed by a class that class succeeds because it expresses more than a class interest. What English working men have established are not class interests but the dictates of a justice, the persuasions of an equity, that were latent but suppressed in the whole of society, and their war was the struggle of society itself to a better consciousness. On the other hand, in nations where conscience is less active than it is in England, class interests have been narrow, hostile, and cynical. Those nations produced Fascism not Communism; reaction not Democracy. But the essential teaching of Communism only differs in degree from the postulates of popular government that were asserted in England in 1649, in America in 1776, and in France in 1789. It is a restatement of the Rights of Man.

Even now nobody construes the Rights of Man literally; but the habits and customs of the people, which increasingly includes its government, are so permeated with ideas which at one time required revolutions to vindicate them, that now it would require a revolution—has, in Europe required a revolution—in order to eliminate them in favour of ochlocracy. By analogy, the advent of Communism should mean that never more will government be possible which ignores the economic well being of the masses. That is the social, practical, significance of the colourful class war, and the colourless Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

In the light of the distinction between nascent Communism and Communism crystallized into institutions, much of the glamour disappears from the purely intellectual constructions of its nineteenth century leaders. The minds of those thinkers

were crowded with a synthesis of doctrines which, critically regarded, are inconsistent, or can only be made consistent by the use of a narrow Determinism or a wide mysticism.

Assuming two eighteenth century theories, the Materialistic interpretation of History and the Labour Theory of Value—one a plausible generalization, the other an ethical proposition in disguise—Marx and the Marxians fused them into the pattern of a social process, which purports to give the support of evolutionary history to a revolution that may have been desirable, but was always contingent on the moral and intellectual equipment of men.

The proper attitude to these theories is to regard them as extravagant descriptions of political changes for the better. The economic interpretation of History is a plea for the unexpressed human material of economic life, and this and the theory of the class-war express the belief that forces are at work which will emancipate these masses. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is the resultant balance of a society in which much has become expressed that was suppressed, and dare not be suppressed again.

Communist doctrine is, then, a mystical, erroneous, but spiritually justified, statement of the intellectual postulates of an order brought into being by a good revolution. The test of Communism is whether, after the Revolution, its intellectual instrument is adequate to state the fundamental principles of the new Society. A new ideal, a new authority, has come into possession of the political and economic fields of activity and obedience. This is a valuable criterion and a model in the criticism of Democracy, if only it is grounded in human acceptance, and if it is understood by those who eventually must live in it. If the authority of this new order is obscure in theory, then it will be tyrannic in practice, and productive of social discord and anarchy.

CHAPTER VII.

DAS KAPITAL AND LABOUR.

I.

IF there is truth in Socialist or Communist doctrine—and this essay involves and supports the belief that there is—that truth cannot be narrowly stated. The constructive ideals of Communism, the conception of planning for purposes which are, in the contemporary view, universal, are becoming accepted over an increasing area of the world, so that even the cynics pay lip-service to them. The technique of Communism, as we have seen, appears to have come to stay. The spirit of the movement has also to this degree permeated the Western World that people tend to think from the standpoint of society, rather than about individuals—a good thing this, as well as a bad. And universally it appears to be realized that what is inaccurately called the Profit Motive has been productive of nothing but loss.

Further, there is a large feeling pervading the world that those aspects of present day society which owe their being to an uncontrolled Profit Motive are transient, whereas those elements in society which seek to be emancipated from the shackles of the Profit Motive are permanent. The contrast is real and important, so long as it is not dogmatically stated in the easy antithesis of Capital against Labour and resolved with the too easy solution of the Class War.

It is here, in the statement of contrast and contradictions, that exactness and clarity are most desirable. The socialistic approach to the world is easily criticised, and shown to be unscientific, when it is stated in the narrow terms of a class conflict. But the class war is not the essence of Socialism. The class war is, rather, a consequence of the prevalence in the world of an attitude which happens to be unsocialistic, but which lacks the merits even of a

healthy individualism. The proper opposite of "socialistic," in the broad sense, is "unsocial." Certainly the bad exploitation of Labour is at least partly caused by the unsocial use of capital. Yet there is a legitimate function of capital as well as an illegitimate. And if the Socialist indictment is drawn so broadly as to constitute an attack on any ordered economy, any reasonable division of function, then the real criminal escapes the jurisdiction with pleas of vagueness and duplicity in the indictment.

Capital and Labour stated in the form of a political slogan is simply a false antithesis. Capital, in a scientific analysis, is nothing but the relatively permanent factor in economic relations. Land is capital. Machinery is capital. Cattle is capital.* Labour is also capital in so far as it embodies relatively permanent capacities. The essence of capital, in all its forms, is that it is not ephemeral, not immediately consumed or exhausted; and its existence for economic purposes implies a control over time on the part of those who exploit it.

The valid distinction between Capital and Labour is really between two varieties of Capital. The less scientific, politically important, distinction derives from the fact that, owing to the circumstances in which economic functions have become specialized, owing to the Division of Labour, and in particular to the division of function between the day to day worker and the controller, or organizer, of that worker's work with the aid of money wages, one variety of Capital has become subordinate to another, so that Labour has been in danger of losing its Capital importance and of being treated as a consumable, ephemeral commodity. In a further analysis this can in turn be shown to be one instance of the simple monopoly enjoyed by holders of money, or of any necessity, over the consumers who need it badly. The monopolist makes his own price for everything, including money. And the worker who is a consumer of goods which he needs money in order to obtain, can only acquire money

* Cattle is, incidentally, the word which is responsible for the not very useful distinction between Land and other categories of Capital. Cattle is also, through another line of philological descent, the origin of the notion of money as a medium of exchange.

by selling for it work which is not scarce, i.e., of which the supply exceeds the demand. This is a consequence of the uncontrolled Division of Labour, which is really the arbitrary Division of Capital, between holders of the accidentally important and the accidentally unimportant elements in wealth and production.

This follows that increase in population which makes life and labour cheaper than goods and money ; and carries with it the enhanced importance of currency, which from being a tool, has become a weapon, and has enabled the creators of the modern industrial system to organize it feudally, just as tribal chieftains were able to parcel out the land because of the superior quality of their swords. Hence Capitalism, in the popular sense, which is the Division of Labour gone mad, the Division of Labour sabotaged because one function, be it weapon or coin, has proved more efficient, and enabled its functionary to wield what is appropriately called sovereignty.

In the feudal form of the Master-Servant relationship, rather than as a single instance of monopoly, Karl Marx saw the organized industrial exploitation of his day. Marx was far too good an economist to misunderstand the proper function of Capital in production. But unfortunately his great work *Das Kapital* is a special study in the flagrant social abuses that were made possible by individual control of the more expensive elements in production —that is to say, the machines. Marx was one of those geniuses who is not content to describe a phenomenon but must see a universal pattern in space and time. Applying the psychological theory that was then in vogue (appropriately enough an English theory, that the human being is entirely acquisitive), Marx conceived the history of economics as a struggle for control of the instruments of production.

To Marx, political and religious authority, the ancient Feudalisms as well as the modern, were phases in an unending battle for the key positions in the economic structure of particular periods. Marx did not seriously consider the possibility that economic Feudalism was merely one instance of human arrogance and stupidity, of desire for power or desire for self-expression,

or of any other human inhumanity from which political and religious tyrannies have been derivatives. Marx lived before the days when psychological influences were to show themselves more complex and less rational than the economic or acquisitive. Therefore, he was able to describe history as the struggle of classes for the acquisition of the means of production. That organic process by which the human raw material of politics tends to become drawn to the top, as the sap is drawn up a tree, could not be entertained, because it was not explicable, in the mechanical terms which were the frame of reference of Marx's age.

Nor could Marx be expected to foresee the qualitative changes that would supervene in economy when economy grew to the scale of the national. Had he foreseen these, he would have realized the possibility that non-economic forces would one day have their effect on economics so as to make economic processes unpredictable. Apart from this, it may also be observed that a hundred years of specialized and aggrandized individualism have shown the infinite complexity of the economic system proper beyond what Marx apprehended. There is very little in Marx to suggest the change in the history of classes that would come about when the underpaid producer became the only possible consumer of the goods he produced. In a word, what Marx sketched was a perpetual clash of forces. What he did not anticipate was the inflation and the bursting of a bubble.

II.

Marx starts and finishes with a theory of conflict. He went so far as to describe the permanent features, the pattern, of that conflict, and to claim for his formula a universality which justified him in describing it as an economic "law." The criticism of the Marxist statement is not that his pictures are inaccurate. Marx's descriptions of capitalistic and proletarian behaviour are subtle, penetrating, and devastating, But Marx was wrong in thinking that his pattern of conflicts was exhaustively descriptive of economic life, just as (and perhaps because) he was wrong in thinking that the economic categories were completely descriptive

of society. In the same way, those physicists before Newton were wrong who regarded the varieties of motion as generically different from each other and qualitatively different from inertia. They failed to notice, or account for, trifling occurrences which eventually were shown to be normal in the wider theory. In the same way, what Newton ignored became important in the wider statements of modern physics.

To cite an example from economics, we have seen in our own times how inadequate were the old arguments for Free Trade or Protection because the arguers ignored the favoured economic background of England during the period from which they drew their examples—ignored the labour markets and the monopolies. Similarly Marx and the opponents of Marx dealt only with the economic foreground (admittedly a wide one), assumed the permanence of a certain kind of competition, and overlooked the possibility that dormant political, religious, or, generally, psychological forces might emerge to overshadow the disputes between employers' associations and Trade Unions. He also ignored the traditional background which made the struggle of the Trade Unions a National rather than a class, struggle. Among other things Marx ignored, as forces of good and ill, the intellectual and moral changes in a world enriched by mass production. There we have one qualitative change which overshadows the changes of quantity that made it possible. Marx could not possibly foresee the phenomenon of state regimentation and its psychological effects; nor could he possibly anticipate the democratic soldier. Incidentally, it may be interpolated, Marx was content to regard the soldier as an epiphenomenon of the class struggle. William Tell was "just another peasant." His apple was not Newton's apple to the student of economic causes.

But now that social changes are larger and more fundamental than they were, (for the world, as it rotates, seems to rotate more violently), we can see that a whole order is changing which is more than the predominance of a class. To-day we have experience, in the world of international finance, of results of an unorganized division of labour more chaotic than mere class

conflict. We realize now that when Adam Smith described the division of labour he took for granted the social workings of a world which ensured that the division of labour was socially useful. The unarticulated nature of the economic system of that time, its possibilities of expansion, the relative smallness of undertakings, operated as conditions of control or distribution, and an implicit principle of association, which become irrelevant and useless when we find in the modern world individual nations devoted to the production of single commodities. The age of Adam Smith was also the age of Malthus, who thought that production could not keep pace with population. He did not anticipate that the inhabitants of Peru or Brazil would some day have to mortgage coffee in order to raise money to enable them to destroy the coffee they produced.

In a wider perspective the conflicts between English employers and English working men is one instance of social discord due to the failure to control or plan the productive exploitation of wealth. The class war is not a cause of defective control, but an instance of it, just as, in a wide perspective, Free Trade is one instance of Protection, not its opposite.

Capital and Labour, then, are two kinds of capital, two kinds of wealth, and two functions in economic life which have become over-specialized. The power of the owners of capital to state their strength in larger amounts of money than describe the strength of the worker under present market conditions, the consequent power to barter advantageously small money wages for much work, and the power of the holders of money to acquire capital status easily, these are evils due to specialization, and are instances of the capacity of individuals to abuse their powers, and to seize control of affairs at all stages of human evolution. These evils are mitigated by the fact that a century of social activity in modern States has given to workers protections and comforts that equalize them as human beings with their masters : and to that end the growing State so taxes the masters that economic differences are reduced even further. Vast increases in the volume of money have constituted a further redistribution

of social capacities as well as creating the possibilities of further exploitation.

While there is a strengthening of Feudal powers in the hands of large money-owners, these make their profit from smaller margins; and, in smaller concerns, there tends to be an adjustment which leaves less important differences than before between the average of wages and of dividends, or the so-called " earnings of management." Again, the desire to exploit is offset by man's gregarious nature, and his desire to be popular rather than powerful. Above all else, Capital in the narrow sense has realized not only diminishing returns, but unexpected barrenness and destructibility. And Capital is now realized to be an organic element in an organic society, in which the sustaining principle is as much the strength and spending power of workers as the power to make profit from them.

III.

Modern Socialism, however, continues to contrast Capital and Labour violently because the movement developed at a time when the antagonism was strong. Theoretically, the Socialists derived, through Marx, the teachings of English philosophers which, as we have seen, were based on experience of struggle and a theory of human acquisitiveness. Thus the Labour Theory of Value which Ricardo used to justify and explain the existence of capital is used by Marx to condemn private capital. But as a theory it is as old and wrong as the Social Contract theories that have been used in politics to justify and condemn the State. Both sets of theories are more seriously wrong because of the amount of truth that they contain than because of any demonstrable falsity.

It is typical of eighteenth and early nineteenth century reasoning that men were over-interested in the origins of things and institutions, and described those origins wrongly.

They were interested in origins because they were attacking a system which relied for its justification on the argument that the kinds, species, orders, grades, of life and society, were fixed and preordained at the Divine Creation. In the hands of writers

like Paley and Butler this belief in a fixed world was consistent with devotion to ideals. In the hands of political intriguists against reform it constituted a rationale of power politics.

In these circumstances, a theory, however crude, which purported to show the origin of an institution was a weapon of attack on that institution; or, conceivably, a weapon of defence.

Thus the Social Contract theory was at once a spear against the Divine Right of Monarchy and a buckler for the State. The similarly pseudo-historical Labour Theory of Value was, first, the defence of merchant adventurers against the landed aristocracy, and, later, a justification for the attack on industrial feudalism by the workers who became conscious of its oppressions.

According to this theory, the only real constituent in the value of any commodity is the labour involved in its production. But the facts or processes which have reduced labour to a commodity (mass production and the specialized control of money and machines) have enabled middle men to divide the money product of any commodity into a minimum for subsistence which goes to the worker and a surplus which the middle man retains and converts into an instrument of further exploitation. Obviously this theory can be so stated as to justify private capital as the product of legitimate enterprise and wise accumulation. Equally it can be stated so as to give the worker a claim in equity for a greater participation than he enjoys in the products of his toil.

As an economic theory, the Labour Theory of Value is inadequate to describe the modern wealth system, because, even if it completely describes the origin of any value (which is doubtful because it assumes the existence of utility from the beginning), it certainly does not account for the majority of modern valuations. These, in order to be explained, require not only an account of the world in terms of the subsistence requirements of labour (which themselves are elastic), not only a formula to describe the place of machinery and the value of land, but a description of the habits of the world, its tastes, its desires, its scarcities and its abundances, the bargaining power of its buyers and its sellers (including the buyers and sellers of machines, land and labour),

to say nothing of the quite special consequences of that quite arbitrary order of wealth which is for ever being determined by the ebb and flow of currencies and the operations of the tides of financial enterprise and speculation.*

Reflection shows, quite easily, that a Labour Theory of Value could only appear true to men contemplating (and advocating as Ricardo did) a world of free markets, including a free labour market—a world, moreover, that had managed somehow to to eliminate or conceal its preferences and its monopolies. The Labour Theory of Value is, indeed, useful to describe one element in value, and is better, or will be better, when restated so as to do justice to the importance, along with Labour, of many other victims of monopoly powers, and the modern importance of Labour itself as a determinant of value through its capacity to spend as well as its capacity to make. But the significance of the theory in an account of Communism is that its existence reveals the desire of the Communist thinker to give a moral justification to something which he was also saying was historically inevitable.

Indeed, the Labour Theory of Value is a strange bed fellow for that theory of human adversity which is the economic interpretation of history. The economic interpretation of history is an account of perpetual conflict and readjustment which goes on precisely because the Labour Theory of Value never really holds good, and because, in consequence, man in the aggregate does not receive a return either proportionate to his effort or adequate to his needs, which increase with his effort.

But Marxian Determinism treats the Labour Theory of Value as an historical fact explaining the origin of exploitation, and, less explicitly, as that pre-established harmony which is the last phase of the conflict latent in the developing subject-matter of history.

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* Marx does not appear to have believed that Labour is a measure of value. And it cannot be so, because the product of a bad machine is dearer, or cheaper, than the product of a good machine, and the labour that went to make the respective machines may have been equal. Marx is more interested in a general theory of exploitation than in industrial accountancy.

The aesthetic falsity of the system is seen when we realize that the Labour Theory of Value is coming true in modern times because the Economic Interpretation of History in the Marxian form is "coming false." The Communist error lies in the effort to make a valid principle of criticism establish itself by an iron necessity (whatever that means). Perhaps this is a flaw which must inhere in any Determinism, which is, incidentally, not refuted simply because it requires mysticism in the appreciation. But Determinism, while it has a unique value as an attitude of mind in times of stress, is always faced in less desperate days with the difficulty of reconciling itself with an active demand for the fulfilment of moral demands.

In economic terms, Marxism, which embodies many valid criticisms of the economic order, and culminates in the moral urge to the righting of wrongs, the equalization of the unequal, the freeing of the unfree, should not be content to treat Capital and Labour as functions in an historic equation exhaustive of reality, but must regard them as controllable functions at the disposal of human powers which are free to make good or bad decisions as to their eventual use.

Marx conceives the whole world process as a series of phases in a class-war, of which the last stage is the expropriation of the expropriators and the conquest of the world by the workers—who are the original creators and the ultimate beneficiaries of all value.

But the merits of Marxism are less evident to those who see it at the end of its triumphs, than to those who participated in its earlier struggles. Clearly there is no reason apparent in Marxism for the direction which he gives to his dialectical process except a mystery, dogmatically described as the economic determination of history, and the doctrine, also stated dogmatically, that labour, being the principal source of value, is entitled to benefit by it according to some law of history which is at once moral law and predetermined fact.

Therein lies a typical weakness of materialistic idealism—the very phrase is suggestive of contradiction. The nineteenth

century inherited from the eighteenth century a theory of human behaviour which enabled thinkers to describe what ought to be as if it must be. The underlying belief of systematic Communism is that to know good is to do good; that if a man realizes, or is forced to realize, intellectually, that some conduct is to his eventual benefit, then he will sacrifice the satisfaction of his immediate desires in order to secure, by that conduct, the future benefit. Now, while it is generally true of world history that man has in many ways behaved rationally, and has progressed to the increase of his comfort as a rational end, it requires little more than a few years of life in the world to demonstrate, to anybody who thinks, that man in any particular case, and even in the aggregate, does not behave rationally, and is, apart from the vaguest generalizations of the actuary, completely unpredictable.

If that is true, then man cannot be relied upon to behave to his own eventual advantage; and history does not even prove that any kind of altruistic conduct, or merely rational conduct, can ever be self-evidently advantageous in exchange for the satisfaction of blind desires. And therewith falls a further unstated article in the materialistic creed; namely, that what is good for all is necessarily good for one. History does not show any necessary process from individual interest to Communal interest. On the contrary, if the signs of modern times be read as portents, there is almost as much reason to fear the anti-communal tendency in mankind as to invest hopes in any human sense of solidarity or social responsibility.

From another aspect, orthodox Communist doctrine endeavours to apply a theory of evolution, which describes some conditions of survival at a certain level, and to apply those principles as a description of evolution at a different level, where the conditions of survival are, for better or for worse, less arbitrary and more within the control of directive thinking. In England a doctrine of the perfectibility of man and his inevitable perfecting by the operations of his own base nature, bridged the gap in thought. And on the continent it was bridged by the mysticism of the German thinkers who, correctly, saw that society contained

organic forces as well as mechanical ones, but gave to those organic forces a purpose, a direction, and an inevitability, uncharacteristic of any organism on sea or land, and whose strange operation is made no easier to understand by the unpredictable generation of modern continental monsters.

As a matter of historical interest it is probable that Communism in its doctrinal form owes more to English errors than to continental ones. The insistence on the supremacy of labour in society is traceable, through the argument which is advanced for it, to the rational mechanical theory of behaviour and, as we have seen, to the cognate belief that the origins of institutions are in some way significant in the valuation of the institution for social purposes. Certainly it is true that in any theory of authority, or any criticism of valuations, an historical account of origins is relevant as an answer to a conservatism based on the acceptance of institutions as fixed species belonging to the archetypes of creation. The state may well have been a consequence of Feudal depredations, the Church a bulwark built by primitive minds against the terrors of a superstitious fancy; the family may, in origin, be a mode of patriarchal exploitation; and wealth may exist in its present form in consequence of the wrongful seizure of the product of labour by those strong enough and cunning enough to seize it.

This attitude is too "spacious" to produce good theory. One is reminded that no justice would ever be done if the Courts were for ever doubting the legitimacy of their jurisdiction or the desirability of penal codes in general.

And just as such a theory proves unhelpful in solving the problems of any particular State, any particular Church, or any particular family, except by the denial to them of all title to existence, so it is impossible even to begin to consider the existent wealth system by assuming that every feature of modern distribution, every feature of the modern creation of wealth, is a traceable continuation from an original exploitation. The world is far too complex for that, too ineluctably plural in its manifestations. Values have been transvalued; new complexes with independent

life have emerged. At the time of writing, institutions like the family and the Church are proving greater bulwarks for the defence of the worker against expropriation than are the soulless States, those corporations, bodiless and spiritless, with which economic evolution is supposed to have supplanted them. Indeed, the Marxian criticism of institutions uses a formula, the emergence of qualitative differences from quantitative processes, which clearly reveals the inadequacy of a theory of origins to account for the present appearances. A number of persons are compelled to obedience, and in that way constitute a social organization, which generates a life of its own, and different forms of authority. The Marxian fails to see the consequences of this, his own true analysis, because he has involved himself in the psychology of perfectionism, and the mysticism of the dialectic.

In conclusion, the Marxian system is naive and very easily criticised. We must remember, however, that its value consisted in the restatement of many things which were, up till that time, even worse stated.

But when, after a century of collectivism, during which labour has become more and more a participant in the enjoyment of the value which, according to Marx, it created, we see that the transition is mediated, not by the operation of blind economic laws, that is to say by the agglomeration of blind facts and events, but by purposive direction, by moral effort, by the force of belief, even by belief in a partially erroneous system such as Marxism. Marxism has generated more than one form of anti-Marxism, and according to the formula, there should be a higher synthesis which—who knows ?—may be something as old as Democracy.

Many criticisms can be brought against Marxism. Nowadays its defects are easier to assess than its merits. Determinism is clearly not a true account of history; and it is hard to state history in terms of economic determinants alone. To say, for example, that a phenomenon like Hitlerism, or anti-Hitlerism, is a mere epiphenomenon of economics is analogous to the saying that life is an accident of protoplasm and to stop at that. It is fatalism—and fatalism has, indeed, characterized the behaviour

of many of the Marxists ; and with fatalism has gone Jesuitry, which usually, and mysteriously, accompanies it.

Secondly, the world has experienced an expansion of value in modern times which reduces the question of the ultimate origin of value to unimportance. If Labour is important in the value system now, it is important as the source of creative voluntary effort ; and it is important as consumer as well as producer.

On the whole, in a restatement of the history of ideas, it is arguable that the system of Marxism is a manifestation of one phase in the evolution of individualism. The Class War is a phenomenon that recurs from time to time when the natural growth of the race is impeded. A period of economic hardship makes the worker think of himself as important and unimportant, drives him to revolt. When his revolt has succeeded he is then the custodian of wealth and the beneficiary of leisure. Then he becomes the hero and the exponent of what may be a new organization of Capital.

CHAPTER VIII.

MATERIALISTIC IDEALISM.

IN approaching the mysteries of Communist orthodoxy it must be remembered that a very important element in the strength of Communism is its intellectual appeal. That, incidentally, is a fact which the intellectuals of Communism have never completely digested.

The early history of Communism in the nineteenth century coincides with the history of intellectual activity originating in England, and developing in a Germany that was enjoying its first and only taste of Liberalism. It was a period of intellectual synthesis, if not creation, comparable to the Renaissance and to the Reformation. Evolution was in the intellectual atmosphere, and systems of thinking were maturing which were to bring the romantic ideas of Rousseau and the Naturalists and the French Revolutionaries to fulfilment in a richer realism than the world had previously enjoyed. The tragedy of the century is that these intellectuals undertook too much and achieved too little. This misfortune is one of many in the history of the world that illustrate the truth (taught by the Socialist) that the incorporation of ideas and institutions is a slower and more difficult process than their appreciation by intelligence.

The early nineteenth century was an age of intense activity in the practical spheres of political reform. But political thinkers (as distinct from politicians) are rarely satisfied with reform. They are not content unless they see in being a system of which any one reform is a permanent and inevitable manifestation. Also, they must see how the world will be occupied when it is reformed; and that is something very hard to see; because probably life will go on as usual; and the effect of the absorption of political novelties into the postulates of ordinary political life, is a delicate effect—real yet all but imperceptible. Consequently,

the political thinker aims at too much. Moreover, the creative thinkers of the world think in unities. And the facts of life and politics are ineluctably plural. Therefore thinkers endeavour to state life in categories which eventually prove too narrow, though at the time of their first statement they appear too wide. But while they are bringing their new ideas to acceptance, they are intellectually richer than their opponents. They see, through reality, a set of principles, as an artist sees a figure in the marble. They see a set of forms wider than, different from, the habits and formalities by which people are bound. They can see, therefore, the absurdities of Institutions, and can restate them convincingly in terms of purposes which men recognize to be important. Thus emerges the dialectician.

The dialectician is different from the formal thinker, say the lawyer, who works out the legal, or economic, or moral, implications of whatever development he is considering. The Socialistic dialectician regards a family, for example, as a specific mode of economic organization. He can see a wife as an underpaid and overworked housemaid. He can regard children as unremunerated labourers. If his categories are economic, he can restate the Church until it appears a class interest, an affair of investments rather than vestments. If he has an historical equipment, he thinks very little of monarchies. As a student of comparative institutions, he compares the Crown unfavourably with Presidencies (forgetting, perhaps, that Monarchies are cheaper) and he is prepared to treat the State (if he does not decide to worship it himself) as an idol that others worship or, on a different level, a mode of economic exploitation, an enslavement of the many by the few.

But, when he has said all this, he finds it hard to construct, because he has an intellectual instrument which enables him to think away any purposes that he would lay down as principles of construction. He has sharpened a tool which will do nothing but cut. He is in the position of that king of dramatic dialecticians who created a world of super men and found he could give them nothing to do except think. A similar position was reached during

the Enlightment, when creative thinkers found nothing better to do than worship Napoleon. It was the age of Werther and of Byron. The uncharted freedom of the over critical years that followed was redeemed by two thinkers who were constructive, even if their constructions do not prove permanent—Hegel who invented a political absolute, and Marx who invented an economic one.

The methods of these two philosophers were similar because one was inspired by the other, because both were Luftmenschen, particularly receptive to the changing intellectual atmosphere of the age, and because both were concerned to give an objective solution to the all but insoluble problems that had engaged the over-subjectivist thinkers of the previous two centuries. A detailed metaphysical analysis (which is out of place here) would no doubt reveal that neither Hegel nor Marx ever completely escaped from the seventeenth century belief that life and thought were the interplay of physical atoms. Hegel's mysticism admits, by escaping from, assumptions that Marx never succeeded in transmuting, though the latter went far towards creating a less anthropocentric world of thought than was the intellectual world of his contemporaries. But Marx as well as Hegel needed a certain mysticism to give coherence to his system. Mysticism enabled Hegel to give a political anchor to his intellect, and enabled Marx to give an intellectual unity and pattern to his economic histories.

Hegel, whose system must be mentioned in any intelligible account of Marxism, was a pure intellectual, a thinker so concerned to state the world in categories of thought that he almost refused to acknowledge the existence of stars in the sky. Because he had a feeling for the thought process, of which he was master, he succeeded in broadening the basis of logic so as to describe, better than the best logicians among his predecessors, the subtle, relational, organic thinking that takes place in the social sciences, and, as we know now, even in the physical sciences.

Hegel's vision was not blinkered by the narrow concept of substances and the doctrine of fixed species which are directly responsible for the formalism and rigidity of even modern legal

thinking, and indirectly responsible for the indifferent metaphysics that prevailed for so long. The thinker, according to Hegel, is the mind through which any subject articulates its functions. The subject is inseparable from and determined by the purposes which the mind sees in it, and with the aid of which the mind is able to apprehend. The mind is not an isolated brain circumscribed by a narrow self; nor is the subject a definable identity externally related to its environment. The subject is an infinite aspect of the Universe, and the mind is "the eye with which the Universe beholds itself and knows itself divine."

In such a system there is no place for formalism. On the other hand, there is every scope for an evolutionary interpretation of the world such as later became common doctrine. And there is emancipation from the narrow subjectivism which prevented the eighteenth century thinkers (with the incomplete exceptions of Rousseau and Kant) from achieving more than scepticism.

But the spacious world apprehended by Hegel required to be filled. And because Hegel never succeeded in admitting the causal influences of relatively independent things, he spent his life inventing laws of thought from which reality could be derived—laws of which any artist or scientist can appreciate the significance, but which remain, in his system, abstract and remote from life. Considering these, and allowing for the fact that all philosophic notions are metaphors to describe abstract principles that are hard to conceive except by metaphor, and even allowing the value of Hegel's inspiration in emancipating the organic sciences, and all sciences, from the influence of mechanism, it remains painfully evident that the Hegelian system is more fertile of failures than of successes.

Hegel, and Marx with him—for Marx started and ended as a "Young Hegelian"—never succeeded in treating their systems as valid principles of criticism only. Their aims were always to perfect the constitutive categories of the whole world order. In their different fields both Hegel and Marx suggest and foreshadow the brilliant intellectual failure of the Italian Croce, who endeavoured to describe the whole of art without reference to

the casual spectator. The casual spectator was part of the aesthetic material "internally related" to the protagonists in the play. Artists inspired by such a theory necessarily create something untrue in some degree to ordinary life. Yet in so doing they express a little of the true artistic tendency to attempt too much. From that failing Hegel and Marx both suffered. In Hegel's case the defect was ultimately more deleterious to his system than it was to the system of Marx. Marx at least found a material which brought his intellectual categories nearer to earth. When Hegel came to earth he only succeeded in recreating the Prussian State.*

II.

The famous Dialectic, enshrined in Dialectical Materialism, is Hegel's highly abstract solution of the problem of finding permanence and reality in the shifting world of the dialectician. To understand it one has to concentrate on one's own thought processes when one is classifying things or movements. One's grouping of things and events becomes wider and wider as the mind expands in thought, and one discovers that the later phases of the process seem to contradict the results of the earlier, and sometimes to resemble what went before that. Thus, to take a crude example, one thinks of marriage as a fixed form for sexual conduct. At a later stage, marriage is one instance of a wider category of amorous experience; and it may be that at a later stage still that formula is inadequate, and a wider conception of social relations is arrived at, in which, possibly, an institution like marriage has more significance, is more of an ultimate, than it was in the previous stage, so that the really advanced thinker finds himself more in sympathy with the unsophisticated defender of matrimony than with the critic who is intellectually nearer to himself.

* It is of interest to note, that even before Marx had adumbrated his doctrines, a school of thought, led by Fichte, had attained popularity, which found escape for the untrammelled self in the State. This school of thought is the inspiration of Hitlerism. Incidentally, the earliest "State socialism" dates from the same period.

Hegel generalized this intellectual process. According to Hegel, life, as manifested in the logic of the creative mind (which is its more real aspect or degree), falls into dialectical forms—thesis, antithesis, synthesis—which describe the development of any idea at any level of experience, and which inter-relate all the classes and stages of experience, so that they ultimately participate in a wider unity. Hegel went further and endeavoured to give concrete form to this subtle process. Being is contradicted by not being, and the two are present in contradiction and agreement in the process of Becoming. This is a highly abstract description of elementary grammar. One great logician has condemned it—and the whole of Hegel's logic—as originating in a pun on the verb "to be." Perhaps the better criticism attaches to Hegel's attempt to build a world on it. The Dialectical process does seem to express some of the changes in things which the old classifications failed to express. The universal that emerges is more concrete, less abstract, than were class concepts, and is more appropriate to a scientific world which is fluid rather than rigid, and in which forms give place to functions. But it is idle to attempt, as Hegel did, to formalize function in fantastic patterns.

The Dialectic, then, is a metaphor to describe what happens among ideas, and the things which the Idealist finds so hard to distinguish from them. According to Hegel, you cannot think of being without thinking of not being, and without moving to the idea of Becoming. From there a dialectical ladder ascends, in zig-zag or spiral, according to a similar pattern. Thus, on a richer plane, freedom involves the idea of oppression; in its manifestation gives scope to oppression; and from the conflict there emerges a more sophisticated idea of freedom at a higher level of experience. At this stage ideas are present and emphasized which echo the level below freedom, and reproduce the distinctions, of class, etc., from whose conflicts freedom first emerged.

Similarly, there is a stage of state control which leads dialectically to individualism; and individualism leads dialectically (by an independent movement) to a different kind of state control.

But the latest stage bears more resemblance to the earliest than to the immediately preceding. In the same way an artist works from rhyme to blank verse rhythm, and thence to a more rhythmic rhyme. The whole system is academically interesting, and would be innocuous were it not that, applied to politics, its results in Hegel's own hands were disastrous. For Hegel eventually solved his problems by treating the world as a system of interpenetrating purposes which fused or culminated in a total activity which is the State.

To the same abstract frame the genius of Marx gave illustration and content, and a more humane application than did his master. Marx saw in the dialectic not an evolution to the moral peaks which are Prussianism, but a process of devolution to the earthier strata of peasants and workers. Marx was one of the small band of great historians who saw the importance in history of those aspects of life which previous historians had undervalued. Marx, like Buckle, realized that Kings and Princes were much less cosmic in their significance than economic facts and physical features. Where other historians drew castles and pageants, they drew landscapes. Marx's discovery was the importance in history of instruments of production. He saw history as the evolution of those instruments and of their changing control, and the changing view of the purposes of production. To this he ingeniously gave the framework of Hegel's dialectic, and the result is Dialectical Materialism, a system not only formally Dialectical, but giving to its exponents an equipment in that ordinary dialectic which is the criticism of institutions.

Dialectical Materialism exploits history by making it the history of exploitation. At the beginning there is the creation of value by labour and the claims of labour to it. Economic exploiters develop their power to organize labour until its operation generates contradictory powers that destroy it, and from the ruins there emerges a new mode of exploitation. This is the over simplified statement of a process which is by no means so uniform; and more complex statements are even less satisfactory. But, taking for granted the prior existence in the world of an element of

competitiveness, the theory expresses metaphorically the transition from, say, landed feudalism to financial feudalism ; from financial feudalism to industrial feudalism. It does not so clearly express, though Marx makes it express, the degeneration of industrial feudalism into the dictatorship of the proletariat. There seems to be a logical gap between the conflict of rival exploiters, and the conflict between exploiters and exploited. Marx tends to ignore this logical gap, for mystics employ logic, are not employed by it. But certainly the latest phases are well, if not accurately, described in the metaphor ; and Marx has given a very impressive description of a class war in which the expropriators of the means of production create for themselves problems which lead to the breakdown of their systems ; and the last stage is the expropriation of the expropriated.

When the capitalistic integument bursts asunder possession is taken by the dispossessed, the world is conquered by the workers, who are the original creators and the ultimate beneficiaries of all value, and that which was the first movement of the social dialectic, the creation of value by labour, becomes the last.

This direction and this result is at least aesthetically justified, and certainly Marxism achieves the aesthetic unity that distinguishes a system of philosophy from a collection of empirical criticisms. In so doing, Marxism has, however, become over-rational, even dogmatic, and has lost touch with the social, political, and psychological facts which inspired each particular article of the Communist creed.

III.

The system of Dialectical Materialism is aesthetically pleasing. It would be more than that if it were regarded by its acceptors as the regulative description of a world in which moral forces were constitutive of society. But Marx and the Marxists are content, in theory, to leave reform and revolution to the historic process itself. Marx, like Spinoza—a fellow prophet in exile—combined two discordant qualities ; percipience into human motives, and a faithful reliance on larger world forces to do that

which should not be beyond the powers of the Free Will.

Marxism is Determinism. And to a complete Determinism it is hard to give a logical refutation. But, when Marxism is analysed, it appears that human action mediates every process in the progressive amelioration of the proletariat that he attributes to the blind agency of History; and Marxism would lose little of its value if it were admitted by the Marxists that History acts organically not mechanically, that individual purposes exist among other purposes, and that it is possible for man to direct the world process so as to fulfil more—may it be said better—purposes than History can be trusted to fulfil by herself.

Society is too complex for History to deal with unaided—let alone determine. In order to account for politics, the Marxist is forced to treat the human being as an internally related function of economic contexts. There is no account of, no scope in Marxism for an account of, the individual who is, in some aspect, external to society as well as a function of it. To Marx, men are, of necessity, either revolutionary units, or reactionary units. Consequently there is insufficient ground in Marxism for a valuable theory of political authority, or a valuable theory of political reform.

Even from the standpoint of economic reform, Marxism purports to be resigned to change, rather than actively reformative. Marx's own appeal, in the Communist Manifesto, to the workers of the world to unite, is only rendered consistent with Marxism by the statement of an unstated belief that the Revolutionary stage of the Class War has arrived, and those who respond to the call will eventually appear to have done so because circumstance, and not the oratory of the prophet, was too strong for them.

Similarly much that is important in Marx loses practical importance because it is stated as fact where it ought to be stated as desideratum.

The Labour Theory of Value is in point. This Theory, which is logically basic in Marxism, is true to the extent that no system of values can be valid or permanent in which the valuation bears no relationship at all to the work involved in the production of

the commodity which is valued. Labour is not a measure of value, and not a measurable function in any given value; and we have seen that the world's values are far too complex for the Labour Theory of Value to be useful as practical economics. But we do see in the world, as industry develops, an increasing recognition that valuations *should* be made with reference to labour; and we realize now the immense creativity of labour, since the worker has it in his power nowadays to increase the stock of wealth almost without limit.

As one of the conditions of value Labour is coming into its own with the aid of its own efforts and with the aid of conditions that do not appear to be predetermined. The Labour Theory is becoming increasingly expressive of reality. But as a statement of fact it fails to account for the economic world; yet it need do so, if it is accepted as a principle of criticism, and a moral demand—not as a dogmatic theory of Creation.

In the practical application of theories the Communist is indeed, better than his theorists. He assumes rightly that values (surplus values in the old phraseology) are not well distributed, and seems to recognize that values are so much a function of harmonious or discordant communities that the term distribution is hardly applicable. It is true that fewer people participate richly in the world of value and value experience at a high level than should do in a satisfactory society. But the line of improvement is not the process of splitting, or atomizing, wealth so that each has an equal quantity. The division of labour makes the equal division of the products of labour utterly impossible. The Communists have realized that the correct approach is the reorganization of society so as to give scope and freedom of a practical kind to everybody. It follows that a system of partitioning, a tendency to grasping rivalry, is not the logical consequence of any true principle that the Labour Theory of Value states. Consequently the Class War does not fulfil any desirable purpose or any immanent economic necessity. If the Communist really believes that a distributive process like class conflict results in the organization which is the condition of participation in value,

he only does so by failing to distribute the terms in his own argument.

It must be understood that Communism has to cope with material not different from the stuff of our ordinary lives. The world has been, in the past, made better by private effort, and thrift, and the enjoyment of surpluses as reward. The Communist wishes the world to be characterized by more surpluses, not by less. In the most revolutionary society, therefore, there will be room for rewards, and even private wealth of sorts. This for the reason that the world cannot be exploited without the aid of the individual, and the forces of individuality are part at once of the problem and of the means to its solution. To make the State into the father of the family, and the user of small resources is, on the other hand, to create more problems than are thereby solved. It is, on the whole, inconceivable that a Class War would have a satisfactory conclusion if it left all individual life as accidental to the State.

As for the Class War itself, it is undeniable that there is a tendency in history for the exploited creators of value to come into their own. The very mortality of exploiters and their human weaknesses guarantee this. And rightly Marx recognized, in many of the great social upheavals, an economic change of this type where other historians only saw dynastic changes and constitutional reforms. Even a religious movement like the Reformation can be interpreted as a protest against badly controlled price levels, if only in religion; the romantic exploits of Crusaders and Explorers can be shown to flow from the economic shortcomings of feudal society; a moral effort, like the American Civil War, can be traced to the competitive demand of a wage-paying industrialism. Generally, the whole of political history can be stated schematically to show economic movements—economic relief of the masses alternating with economic reaction and oppression. But it does not follow from this that history can be stated as the working out of given economic laws. *A fortiori*, history cannot be confined in the narrow formula of a dialectic which is not economic but abstractly logical.

Marx, incidentally, makes much use of the word "laws," and speaks of society as determined by scientific laws (i.e., universal patterns of experience, statements of invariable concomitances, mathematical regularities) just as the physical world is expressed in, or determined by, the laws of physics. Perhaps his Teutonic obsession with mathematical regularity (triumphing over his Semitic imagination) caused Marx to confuse tendencies with laws, conditions with causes, phenomena in particular contexts (like the English woollen industry) with principles of universal scope and validity. In other words, a loose philosophic instrument, and a certain mysticism, enabled Marx to generalize the tendencies he had discovered into a formal interpretation of history. But the laws which operate through that interpretation are very vague, mystical ones ; the implied, but unclearly stated, principle that there is a world tendency for values to find an equal level, or for values to find their mysterious way to their own sources ; and the more clearly formulated, but mystically grounded, principle of the social dialectic.

The social dialectic, expressed in the Class War, is one more phenomenon which may be desirable, but is not necessary except to Marxism. Its form is shaped by the Hegelian dialectic. Between the classes of exploiters there is conflict resolved into wider and wider reconciliations, but breaking down eventually into chaos. Strangely, but not clearly, interwoven with this conflict of the upper classes is the increasingly dynamic revolt of the exploited classes. When chaos supervenes they come into their own. The revolution of the proletariat is preparing itself endlessly and untiringly with the patience and energy of all history (attributed to it by its patient students).

But it will be observed here that Marx expects the patience and energy of history to be expressed through active revolutionaries. The degree of free will which is imputed to these for this purpose is said by Marx to be nothing more than the inevitable consequence of the social pressure which is operative in the age that produces the revolution. The Marxist has never seriously considered the possibility of recurring equilibria, based on some-

thing analogous to slavery, of which instances are, on a small scale, the Greek city state, on a larger scale the Roman Empire; these in actuality; and in possibility, the world Empires of the Persians, of the Carthaginians, and, the cruellest of all, the Teutonic New Order. A free world, with machines for slaves is not better grounded in any purely material necessities (admitting that history knows necessity) than is an autocratic world based on human bondage.

Unfortunately the Communists have taken Determinism too seriously. That has enabled them to regard with equanimity the most revolutionary changes. Determinism is, indeed, the proper philosophy for a world in a state of flux, where changes are not made in order to preserve, but whatever is preserved is preserved in order to be changed. But if it is desired to guide the political destiny of men or groups, less ambitious systems appear to be more useful. The deterministic idealist sees history in so great a perspective that the fails properly to assess the importance of individual facts and individual persons in the determination of contemporary history. A generation of thinkers which knows not Joseph is apt to think of political economy in terms of alternating famine and plenty. Similarly a generation blind to the importance of individual genius saw only the economic periodicity of poverty and plenty, and failed to see the revolutionary control of economy that made it possible for one nation to precipitate a successful war.

Indeed, one is inclined to suspect in the modern materialists an apathy, and a disinclination for constructive thinking, which is proper to the age, and proper to materialism. Materialism does express the despair that possesses the philosopher when he realizes the unperfectibility of man, and recognizes that man does not behave rationally. Then he accepts scepticism and reconciles himself to determinism; and his dialectic, which was the demolition machinery used in philosophic construction, serves only to destroy popular faith in ordinary valuations.

Fortunately, when Communism becomes practical it ceases to be Dialectical. In so far as it has remained Dialectical, it has

been dangerous to itself. Dialectic, as we have seen, is the intellectual process which whittles away differences by argument from Common purposes and mechanical origins. Dialectic (of which Dialectical Materialism is one instance) is the arsenal of materialist, of whom Shaw speaks when he says that the materialist has all his weapons about him. If one approaches Society from the advanced yet naive standpoint of the nineteenth century evolutionist, one can easily reduce institutions like the family or marriage or government to explicable, but, at our level, unnecessary manifestations of material causes and crude purposes. A certain historic necessity has brought them about, but with equal inevitability they will pass away. But when the beneficiary of these ethical clearance schemes realizes that his valuation of human institutions is part of the forces that will reconstruct social institutions he is not certain of his choice. Dialectic fails to perceive or appreciate that process of transvaluation which gives to the effete form of family or Church or State a new value in changed conditions.

Individuality itself, which is an emergent from the lower levels of material life, has no place in the logic of scepticism. The Self is always an accident to the materialist, never a determinant. Yet, if ever a system depended on the courage and independence of individuals, that system is materialism. We have seen that the substance of human life takes individual forms, and individual destinies enrich it. Moreover, it falls to a system like Communism to solve, or restate, many of the most specific and practical problems of social organization. To attempt the solution of these problems calls for more than an academic nihilism. The result has been that the practical programmes of Communist States have been all but divorced from Communist ideology. In so far as the doctrinal element has survived, its influence is baneful as well as beneficent.

Thus a certain Jesuitry, a belief that the end justifies the means, and a mystical feeling that fate is on the side of the proletariat, has enabled a country like Russia at once to survive, and, surviving, to adopt the political technique of the most unCommunistic

countries. Or, perhaps, the truth is that modern Communism, like modern Fascism, amounts to nothing more than a rationalization of changes in the form of a state; an attempt to account for what one may call the joint stock state, the self conscious state, the state which has great difficulty in not regarding itself as the crown and flower of human experience.

Nevertheless, when every possible criticism of Marxian dogma is stated—and any dogmatic system can be reduced to the ridiculous—this theoretic construction remains among the most impressive in the history of thought. When the cold water of hostile criticism deluges it, the theory still remains warm and inspiring. And this for the sufficient reason that every doctrine in Marx expresses an important tendency in reality, an important truth in some human context, even if it does not express a law of the social universe.

The Labour Theory of Value describes one factor in economics that cannot be ignored. The tendency for producers to be consumers, in increasing proportion to their efforts, is sufficiently true to history to describe the difference between the feudal ages and our own. The importance of economic facts over the formalities of law, politics, and religion, accounts for a great deal of history that would otherwise be unaccounted for, and is strikingly true as a description of particular periods, like our own behaviouristic decadence, even if it is not a full account of ages when a better spirit has moved over the void.

From another angle Communism embodies an important criticism of values and authorities, for Communism represents an advanced stage in the tendency for that which is the object of government to become the subject. Just as the craftsman becomes the servant of the material to which he devotes his mind and skill, so the conscientious ruler is the creature of the society which he rules; and there is a stage of self-conscious development—perhaps an ideal stage, never to be attained—at which Society rules itself in a way that material can never shape or form itself. And Communism is an important criticism of Society because the process which it states to be a desirable

process is also an actual process. The proletariat, by reason of its numerical preponderance, by reason of its purchasing power, by reason of its increased self-consciousness, tends more and more to suffuse the spirit, and seize the machinery, of the modern state. And this is no theoretic process. There is no reason to suppose that it is the result of a predestined class-struggle. It may be part of the enrichment and expansion of a world whose wealth is increasing. If there is inevitability in Communism it is not demonstrable. Rather it resembles the mysteries of mediaeval predestination theory in which man does not grasp the pattern of his future. On the other hand, the history of Communism shows the subtlety of history in the fact that it has come to maturity and acceptance long after its purposive efforts and its propagandist theories had been generally refuted and rejected; and much that was prophesied has, in some way, come true.

In conclusion, one characteristic of Marxism, if it existed in isolation, would be valuable. Marxism is the first political system in which the approach to the problems of politics and economics is made, not from the standpoint of individual obeyers and enjoyers, but from the standpoint of groups, societies, classes. Marx, who started out from the narrow materialistic individualism of the English seventeenth and eighteenth century thinkers, and never, indeed, completely emancipated himself from their assumptions, did succeed in constructing a system which was group-centric rather than anthropo-centric, social and objective, rather than individual and subjective. That is perhaps the distinguishing mark which entitles Marx, rather than any of his modern predecessors, to be called a Socialist. In the last analysis the metaphysic of Marx is the foreword to a social theory of society. In the same period when anthropologists were discovering that ancient societies were herds rather than aggregations of units, Marx laid down principles for modern society on the assumption that this too was a herd rather than a conglomeration of atomic personalities. We find now that the anthropologists were describing facts not so far removed in time as we thought they were.

But, if society does not revert to the brutal herd, it will develop as a social organism, of which Marx must be counted amongst the earliest prophets—a part creator—for he helped to create a mentality in the world better equipped for those psychological changes which are the essence of modern reform, and which are socially more important than the intellectual appeal of any academic theory.

CHAPTER IX.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND ETHICS.

THE intellectual effect of Marxism is, when the confusions are cleared, a revolution in outlook which is productive in many instances of a new psychological attitude.

To the fair minded person, brought up in the atmosphere of capitalism, there is a certain rightness and a certain equity in the culling of rewards from successful enterprise and from thrift. This attitude, which is not ethically wrong, was the attitude of the Puritan. But even in the obscure days of the seventeenth century the Puritans themselves realized the intellectual difficulties of this position when they attacked the problem of usury and found its control incompatible with the theory of individual importance and individual responsibility which had inspired the revolution.

Nor is it easy for the most righteous minded of Puritans to appreciate that there is a duty, bigger and more difficult for individuals than the duty of charity, to compensate in this world those who suffer the consequences of their own failures, their own lack of enterprise, their own thriftlessness. Why, they ask, should State aid give to the shiftless everything that could be secured by private insurance or other mode of thrift ?

To this the Socialist answer is the demand for a psychological revolution. The socialist asks the Puritan to make his ethical unit not an individual, but a group, a class, or the whole of Society. The validity of that step cannot be proved by logic. But Marx has persuaded the world that an account of history can be given which shows the development of social entities which are not individuals, and to the existence of which individuals owe the content and substance of their minds and lives.

The attitude which Marx persuades people to adopt is the attitude that obtained in religion, in the Mosaic system for

example, before the doctrine of the immortality of the soul threw an over-emphasis on the individual, and, while giving man a new weapon against reality, gave him also a notion of his own completeness which is not socially justified.

Socialism rightly protests against a self which abandons the world in order to save its soul. The soul that abandons the world is a poor incomplete thing, unenriched by sympathy and untested by experience. The cloistered and fugitive virtues are out of place in a world where people co-operate willy nilly to provide themselves with that safety and security without which their souls would require an all too quick salvation.

This recentring of value round the group is characteristic of a phase in evolution which is dominated by the group. The present day danger is the danger of forgetting that groups are composed of, enriched by, and justified by, the individuals they contain.

But, allowing for the dangers of over emphasis, it remains true to say that Socialism is a contribution to thought which makes possible the harnessing of social psychological forces. The problem of Socialism is to do what the socialists have not yet done; to guide the behaviour of groups when men become group conscious. But this is not achieved by the mere study of averages of social behaviour. *Social psychology only consists* in the facts which Socialism must alter and conquer with the aid of the good will. The tendency of masses to accept the conditions into which they are born is too clear to require prolonged study. We live in an age when Behaviourism seems to have come true, when men think in slogans, articulated unconsciously in the epiglottis. But to say that is not to solve any problem.

Nor is a Russian laboratory investigating conditioned reflexes the proper locus for experiments calculated to give guidance to social behaviour and political obedience, and to create those conditions in consciousness which should (rather than do) control political obedience and economic behaviour. That social psychology is accepted before any new ethical system is deduced shows that the moral relationship between society and the

individual has not yet been adequately stated from the socialist standpoint. Alternatively, it indicates the reliance on Determinism which is the depressing feature of this period, and substitutes for convention the acceptance of uncriticised authorities on account of their mystical appeal.

II.

The Socialists have at their disposal the raw material of the political future. They can appeal to a generation growing up too rapidly to be anchored to the past, with promises and hopes that involve a disregard for the past.

The minds to which they appeal, being young minds, are socially malleable. And Socialism contains in itself a principle of conduct which is true to human nature before that crystallizes into the hard forms of Individuality.

The Socialist would impose upon members of society a standard of conduct which is objective, not subjective. In that respect Socialism bears analogy to the common factor in most of the great religions. That attitude to life which is interested only in the task, unsparing of effort, enthusiastic with the hope of successful achievement for its own sake, that attitude to life and persons which accepts, enjoys, appreciates, hopes, rather than hates, rejects, and despairs—that essentially unsophisticated attitude is exactly the same that the Greeks cherished in their young men, and which the religious mystics, Jesus, Spinoza, Tolstoy, have described with the metaphor of love.

The same willingness of the spirit, to burn without thinking of extinction, can be directed, or allowed to drift, into self-seeking as self-consciousness increases. It can also be dedicated to the service of crueller deities, as when the youth and enthusiasm of Germany was regimented in the Hitler Jugend to the pursuit of vengeance, and dedicated in sacrifice to the State.

The purposes of self-preservation, self-assertion, self-aggrandizement, are safer principles than these. Perhaps fortunately, the natural limits of imagination and energy, as well as the education of generations, do operate as discipline (if that is the proper word)

to direct the activities and emotions of men at an early age to the fulfilment of the narrower purposes which are their own desires. And in modern times that self-interest, which is so stupid and so easily misdirected, has yet constituted a safety-valve for fanaticism, and reduced the fanatics of the world to dependence for support on their capacity to intimidate and cajole—capacities which are not infinite.

Against the operations of the narrow self, the material self, as principle, Socialism, and all reform, is a protest. The normal "homme moyen sensuel" the apostle of "give and take," is no opponent of reform if he can understand it. The encrusted selves, however, the personalities so concerned with themselves that they begrudge the welfare of others, the envious, in fact, and the usurious, who carry the Profit Motive so far that it excludes all other motives, and mechanically sweeps from the field of behaviour all other psychological purposes, these have reduced self-interest to such a low moral and intellectual level, and have so increased numerically, with the pressure of economic conditions on the morally undeveloped masses, that the Socialist regards himself as in opposition to any degree of self-interest, failing to see that he is thereby undertaking to reconstruct a world without its most active dynamic principle.

The presentation, then, of an ethic, which would ignore the ordinary self and substitute a social ideal, or the presentation of a metaphysic which would lower the self to the level of the accidental, these are revolutions which go too far to be useful in the reform of human conduct. The Socialist is amply justified in calling in a new world to redress the balance of the old. In so far as he introduces the concept of society in order to widen and enlighten the purposes of individuals, he is enriching social life. When, however, he asks for dedication to a social purpose, he asks for more than humanity can give him.

Human nature is capable of love—but not of an infinite love. Political purposes survive because in the long run they coincide with the majority of private purposes subject to a moral average. Moreover, the problem of politics is not how to generate asceticism

and unworldliness. The major problem of politics is to control the relationships between human beings, including the relationship between man and the group as such.

In other words, Socialism stands in need, not of fanatica devotion on the part of its adherents, but of a balanced recogniti that elements which have so far been ignored in society a important.

The Socialist wants the individual to recognize that if he, individual, does constructive work in the world by his own eff and alters the conditions of few or many, he is not entitl usurp power on that account, for, if he does, he ignores th that himself owes more to the civilization which is his environ than he can ever repay.

On the other hand it is also not good political thinking to expect the individual to think only of the social whole, in abnegation of himself. This is as unreal as the individual isolationism that is opposed to social co-operation. The difference between the two attitudes is not so great as migh logically appear. In the person of a Tolstoy the extremes o Individualism and social devotion meet in common opposition to political society. The peasant loves his neighbours, but he does not understand fighting for some of them against others.

But the possibilities of an order, such as Tolstoy wished to restore, a primitive Christian order, a Hindu order of the type advocated by Gandhi, these are too remote from the facts of modern society to be of more than speculative interest. They are mystical, and anarchic. Socialism, on the other hand, is too important for modern society, and modern society is too important a subject-matter in Socialism, for socialist progress to be conten with the envisagement of an anarchic ideal. But becaus Socialism has not yet perfected its metaphysics, its psycholog and its ethics, the progressives of the world still lack an adequate theory to state the limiting conditions that should govern the relationship of the individual to the political order.

Socialism has imported new and valid postulates into politic new criteria that should be invaluable as guides to obedience

revolt. Unfortunately, Socialism lacks a theory of Authority, and rests content with a mystical muezzin-call to social dedication to take place against a political background where only an unsophisticated anarchism prevails.*

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*It is, perhaps, worth observing that the Russian Revolution, the Revolution of the Proletariat, was conceived narrowly, in order to be successful, as the struggle for self-expression of a class—at the outset a narrow class—the sailors and artisans of Russia, who formed Lenin's original dynamic proletariat. These were not ascetic, not mystical, not anarchistic in the theoretic sense—they expressed not the visions of Tolstoy but the bitterly human yet humorous depicted by Gorki. It is not without significance that this realistic, Dickensian, labourer stands higher in the esteem of modern Russia than that greater artist and thinker who was Tolstoy.

CHAPTER X.

MEETING OF EXTREMES IN MODERN AUTHORITY.

IT remains, then, to consider the contribution of materialistic thinking to the theory of political obedience. In present day Europe the revolt of oppressed masses against their economic masters conceals, and unfortunately confuses, the purely political problems of revolt against tyrants in the domain of politics proper. To this problem, it is pertinent to observe, modern materialistic thinking makes little contribution.

Unfortunately we find that the most significant word in the Socialist political vocabulary is anarchy. This is one of those ambiguous words in the vocabulary of contemporary politics which are dangerous because of their ethical implications under both meanings. Hitler is an Anarch, and Lenin started life as an Anarch. The double significance of the word may be accidental, but is portentous, because it reveals a strange hiatus in advanced political thought; and that accounts for the strange meeting of extremes in which the exponents of completely different purposes, the exponents of completely different authorities, take on similarity.

Communism as Lenin first knew it, the Communism of Marx, the Communism of Tolstoy, and the Communism preached all his life by Kropotkin, was anarchistic. Although in romantic fiction, which may or may not be consciously inspired by the valuations of capitalists, the anarchist is depicted as a hooded purveyor of badly-made bombs, Anarchism, in its theoretic sense, does not signify lawlessness. Marxian anarchism is a disbelief in the State. Communism, which we have seen to consist of ideals that are good and doctrines that are not all good, includes a very

useful criticism of political authority. There is English teaching behind this. But in countries which had not achieved the limitation of political authority by law and by tradition, in countries whose governments were vastly different from the toothless Leviathan of Hobbes (the teeth having been extracted by Locke), in such countries the State was only oppressive. In that context the doctrine was tempting that State authority was a wicked imposition upon men and women who could, if left alone, rule their lives peaceably in families and primitive economic cells. In different ways both Marx and Tolstoy felt that too much had been rendered unto Caesar.

Inspired by such traditions as the Tolstoyan, and by the need for revolt against the excesses of authoritarianism and the flagrant abuses of naked power, modern Communism, if it were nothing else, would be a valid criticism of dogmatic authority and an unanswerable protest against tyranny. We have already seen that many of the extravagances of Communism are the exaggerations of true doctrine, normal at a time when new postulates are being introduced into politics. Much of the dialectic, much of the economism, much of the learning and prophecy declaratory of the class war, the revolution, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and all of the anarchism, become understandable, and much less appalling to English ears, when it is realized that they constitute the first articulate protest by the backward nations against evils that we thought had been exorcised in the West. Communism constitutes a protest, in the language of the nineteenth century, and with the aid of the technique of the twentieth century, against tyrannies characteristic of the twelfth century. Violently stated, in accordance with the exigencies of other situations, Communism lays down the doctrine that authority is conditional, not absolute, and crowns that reasonable, and (to us) orthodox, teaching with a doctrinaire farrago of materialist ideology.

But although Communism can be rationally stated as a theory of conditional authority, and although, so stated, Communism is compatible with a democracy which has abolished the realities

of Kingship, and which, by its traditions, effectively prevents its government from arbitrary exploitation, nevertheless Communism has presented to the world more problems of authority than it has solved ; and has indeed achieved, in its manifestation, an ominous appearance of authoritarianism. The reasons for this are not limited to the backwardness of the Russian peoples. Communism attains its ends with the aid of all the complexities of modern organization. Modern economic life, and particularly modern industrialism, involves the ordering and discipline of masses of people and their attunement to prompt obedience. In the old days, the early days of trade unionism, the factories were citadels of individualism ; and the trade unions do still preserve something of that tradition. But this is an age of fierce competition for employment, when men are only too anxious to have their ears nailed to the door in exchange for the nourishment which shall qualify them to endure further servitude, an age in which trade unions are all too easily regimented into a Labour Front, and in which discipline for progress bears every resemblance to the regimentation of tyranny. In the conscript legions of industry there may be a certain cameraderie between superior and subordinate. That may be a redeeming feature. It may also be an illusion, to mask the more rigid discipline of an American Army. If, then, a social organization for progress is ordered and recruited in this fashion, even in the cause of emancipation, still the major problems of authority remain to be solved and appear all the more insoluble.

Further, whatever be the true solution of this problem, certain it is that the anarchistic traditions of nineteenth century Communism are as inadequate to solve it as the state machinery of the twentieth century. In so far as Communism is Anarchism, it is also anachronism. Anarchism, as the simple negation of Authority, is a theory too primitive to be useful, and fails to account for the facts and appearances of social life. In the same way a Christian Scientist fails to analyse illness. The over-criticism of order, in Science or in Politics, leads to the arbitrary. Hence the paradox that a simple anti-authoritarianism has invoked

an agency which is partly responsible for the creation in modern times of that only real anarchy—which is tyranny.

II.

Both the anarchist and the modern anarch completely fail to understand, or to create, true authority, because all that they are used to, all that they understand, is power. The anarch inherits his power and his conception of power directly from the power politics of ancient Feudalism ; but this power is reinforced by the general reversion, in modern times, of a much more sophisticated society than the Feudal, to an apparently unsophisticated villainy and villeinage. And the anarchist offers no apparent opposition to this reversion because he, too, has based his hopes on the belief that society is only amenable to material forces, and, in relying on those for his eventual emancipation, is obliged to accept a period of tyranny, which he believes is transient, but which carries all the promise of permanence.

The Communist has never properly stated the problem of authority because he derives from an age which had no proper theory of personality and no confidence in human obedience. The whole of Marxian Determinism is based, not on the ideals which it pretends to support, and not even on the mysticism of Hegel, but on the English psychological Hedonism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, according to which human action was entirely accountable in terms of the very crudest needs and desires without remainder. Since in those days other theories of authority were identified with an effete monarchy and an, as yet, incompletely reformed Church, it follows that the intellectual sources of Communism are polluted with power politics.

But the distinction between Authority and power is not to be shelved : for it expresses one of the most delicate and vital of political differences. In theory, Authority can only be proved by power. Yet when that demonstration is invoked, authority loses the mediateness which makes obedience an act of will, rather than the reflex action of a nervous system under pressure.

Authority may be compared to a voice which calls to obedience; power to an arm that strikes. Power differs from authority as a blow differs from a demand, a request, or a supplication. The one is immediate, the other mediate. Power is like the lightning as it strikes; Authority is an atmosphere that may be charged with thunder.

The relation of Authority to the power capable of enforcing it is something that can never be seen, or established by deductive reasoning. Therein consists its reality. Its mediateness is not different from the mediateness which exists in the human will, or in purpose, or from the unprovable nexus in causation. Those gaps can never be bridged. But the virtue of authority consists precisely in the gap between obedience and power. Therein lies the reality of human personality, which obeys. That obedience may, in the individual or in the mass, be influenced by power. One may trace its origins in the first occasion of its manifestation, very near to brute force. And such a history is a valid ground of criticism directed to the desirability of any particular act of obedience. But that does not justify the *non-sequitur* which reduces even an altruistic obedience to a mechanical process of habit and reflex action.

But to the naive Communist the forms of authority are nothing else than the sound forms which express the power politics of all the ages. They range from the haunting voice of the totem spirits in the magic wood to the crescendo of Wagnerian Gods thundering across the sky. Authority to the complete sceptic is the voice of Nimrod, rough as hewn from the earth, and the brazen trumpets that thunder the triumph of the first Feudalism. He does not distinguish these from the silver-bugles that tell of a new Feudalism based on wealth, led by industrial captains and fortified behind factory walls; and he does not believe in, though his leaders follow, the golden trumpets that ring from those idealistic heavens where dreamers have built their cities.

Yet, if they listened to the voice of Clio, their own Muse, which they have brought from her narrow grove on Helicon to preside at the Kremlin—or in Valhalla—the Materialists would know that

there is at least one voice that speaks from mind to mind and does not invoke in aid of its persuasive force the thunderings of power. They do not hear this voice, these historical determinists, because it happens to be their own.

The voice of history, they say, is an echo from the clash of brute forces. That is the great materialistic fallacy. Certainly the voices of authority have owed some measure of their obedience to forces and powers that they expressed; and when those realities disappeared, then they were empty echoes from the deserted palaces of Olympus and the forsaken fortresses of Sinai. Yet, when the original voices did command assent, they meant more to the listeners than echoes or threats. The listeners heard and obeyed. That may have been due to ignorance, but it was not blind fear. At a later stage, when, instead of men bribing gods, would-be gods began to bribe men, it was already clear that some spark of individual choice, however insignificant, animated the all but mechanical responses. And, at a higher level, which is not necessarily a later level, we find examples of devotion to objective ideals which may be said to bear no relationship to reality, but which enjoy the quite substantial subsistence of operative illusions.

Authority achieves its quintessence when it expresses a purpose rather than a force, when it expresses something organic, not mechanical. Then it is a necessity which is not above the law, but which is of the essence of some law at least; a necessity of a moral type, unsanctioned except by the will of the obeyer. This, which is not typical of law at the level of physics and politics, does describe some of the greatest humane, ethical, and aesthetic efforts and collaborations recorded by history. This is the type of authority as distinguished from power, authority conditional, conditioned by its aptness to a purpose. When that principle is introduced into politics, as it was by the English Puritans for example, then politics ceases to be power politics and becomes a system of obedience. But, at that level, there are postulates of obedience. Obedience must not be response to the call of uncontrolled desires. Equally, obedience ceases to exist before

brute force; and then revolt is justified. The materialist has regarded revolt as a manifestation of force equal to, or stronger than, the manifestations of force which it repudiates. Making mathematical allowance for the inertia which is habit, and in so far as revolt consists in the technique of revolution (rather than in the purpose of revolution), that teaching is true. But it expresses a change from tyranny to tyranny, not from tyranny to freedom.

Because Communism was conceived in the darkness of terror and reprisal, and because its teachers happened to be imbued with a theory of mechanical forces, Communism conceals the value of what are really its principles. Communism divested of some of the text and texture thrown over it by the Marxians, contains the proposition that the state is made for man, not man for the state. Communism, when it forgets that doctrine, reverts again to a state which regards man as the bricks in its edifice, the fodder of its cannon.

The consequent meeting of extremes, in which Communism appears to lose any distinction from the cult of the totalitarian state, is due to the scepticism inherent in a system which includes no proper deduction of the categories of authority. The Communist absorbs that part of the evolutionary philosophy which is concerned to account for things and institutions as part of a material process, but he fails to absorb the maturer doctrine according to which, within the processes of evolution, forms and values emerge and take on independent reality if not permanence. He accepts a history of tribalism and patriarchalism in order to show the unsaintliness of human sanctities, and is therein justified; but he forgets, to his own advantage and to his own detriment, that constant process of transvaluation, by which, even in his own theory, qualities emerge from quantities, harmonies from discords, and which accounts for some part, at least, of the truth about monarchies and churches and families and social organizations. These, be it remembered, may well be features that redeem a material world from its materiality, as well as forms which rationalize purely material purposes.

But in the flux of material causes values are hard to isolate and seize. In the Communist system consequently, there is a serious danger that " whirl is King." And this intellectual Laodiceanism unhappily coincides with, and expresses, the psychological instability of the age. For Communism has, unfortunately, grown to importance at a time when the western world, tired by unchartered freedom, was falling back from systems of thought into systems of habit. The stridencies of power are not yet submerged in the symphony of authority. Recapitulating a phenomenon in evolutionary biology, the political world has largely reverted, in the stress of development, to primitive type. Nor is this peculiar to part. The voice of Nimrod has sounded in the forests of the East as well as on the plains of the West. But the Eastern world, which has its freedom yet to achieve, is more hopeful for politics than the West, because a primitive herd mentality is less dangerous than a herd mentality by way of reversion.

III.

The paramount need of Western Society is to find a principle of Authority which shall be appropriate to an age in which power obtained by persuasion is as important as power obtained by coercion. Money has constituted itself a lever by which those in position to raise it can lift the State, if not the world.

Against the excesses of force there are, even in these days, unexpressed reserves of moral strength in society, and a general acceptance of the postulate, by ruled and ruler alike, that consent is the condition of authority. But when money comes to buy that consent there is no limit to the excesses of Authority.

In present day Europe we see the consequences of the absence of a theory of Revolution such as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries invoked against Feudal Kings. No one appears yet to have stated what control the State must put upon its own purposes and the purposes of its more powerful subjects. Theoretically there is ample scope for laws that shall limit the excesses of State activity and individual activity. Instead of

developing these, Society has either pledged itself to the abolition of the State, or allowed particular forces to harness the State to the exploitation of Society. Where the forces that have harnessed the State happen to be bad ones, there is malevolent despotism. Where those forces are good, there is benevolent despotism. But whether in Germany and Italy, or whether in Russia, or whether in Totalitarian England, there is no readiness on the part of the rulers to state what principles bind them, so that if they depart from the essentials of political morality people will be justified in disobeying.

We live at a moment in time when political boundaries and limits are in a state of flux. Perhaps we are on the eve of a period of social consciousness, in which people will work out for themselves a proper theory of obedience—a theory, as it were, of political types. At present we make many sacrifices of liberty to preserve liberty, of life to preserve life. But the principles are yet to be made clear. When that is done, then we shall know what we are justified in sacrificing, and for what purpose, and at what stage the sacrifice becomes wrong, and contradictory, and an effort is called for to save us from the despotic routine. Meanwhile, we have lived through years in which the challenge to Revolution has been thrown down by tyrants abrogating the primary sanctities of political and social life. We have also lived through years in which ourselves have sacrificed the liberties that we fight for so that they may be better preserved. From these experiences society may eventually deduce better categories of authority, principles of obedience and of revolt, principles which, had they been established in Europe, would have prevented many recent abuses of power; principles which, if they had been part of the social consciousness, would have prevented tyranny even without resort to arms.

We are on the eve of great changes. The paramount need of society is a balance maintained during processes of change. There must be a recognition of purpose so as to justify authority, and a constant criticism of authority in the light of permanent and changing purposes. Authority is integral to modern industrial

life, and authority clogs it. The State, as employer and enterpriser, is one instance of necessary authority in constant peril of archaism and abuse. The Communists started with the intention of abolishing the State, but, in its latest phase, Communism seems in danger of making the State too much of an end. Doubtless the political mode is an important aspect of human obedience. Among the many interests which impinge on personality and create it, the political is becoming one of the most important, as it absorbs, or harmonises with, other human interests. Probably the political mode of obedience has come to stay. But it must remain conditional on values which are above it even though it co-ordinates them. The state participates in life and controls life, even if it is not identical with the whole of life. When it makes that claim, then it is Moloch incarnate in the many, an obscene cult lacking nothing of the sacrifices and perversions that characterized the oldest idolatries.

PART III.

ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

BRITAIN'S CRITICAL AGE.

THE dominant fault in England during two decades has not been lack of intelligence. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that the conventional pose of British stupidity has been used more than once in recent years for quite Machiavellian purposes. And, outside partisan politics, an excess of intelligence, an over ambitious intellectual effort, has been responsible for more confusion of thought and more failures of will power than could ever result from stupidity. Nevertheless, England continues to need intelligence, never needed it more; and if he escapes for a moment from that overhanging consciousness of guilt which redeems this generation without illumining it, and if he concentrates on those human characteristics which are the real materials of world rebuilding, the British student of affairs will find that the country is suffused with intellectual activity of a creative character.

Under the conscious burdens of regret and remorse that rest upon the mind of England, there is plenty of active critical intelligence. This critical intelligence must be guided; must remain critical, and not merely gullible of any system that expresses criticism; nor over critical of that, and so, reactionary. To maintain an attitude which is both reformative of faults and conservative of values is at once fantastically difficult and desperately necessary. To keep alive a spirit of change without

surrendering to scepticism and anarchism, and not to seek escape with the aid of easy formulae that transform *idealism into idolatry*, this is the subtlest and the most urgent problem that was ever presented to the human mind—and certainly to the British mind. For the articulate intelligence which requires to be so controlled is not only the greatest merit of democracy but its gravest danger.

In the days when English life moved more vigorously and with fewer difficulties, in the days before the limits of her resources began to be contemplated, and in the days before that, when the commonwealth was the concern of fewer classes and the real wealth of the country was still untapped, the people as a whole were not politically self-conscious. But now England is at a peak of self-consciousness. The very categories of modern life are changed, and changed in a way that makes for the self-consciousness of the masses. A synthesis of many different processes of emancipation and materialization, modern society is something that thinks economically rather than traditionally, aesthetically rather than ethically, politically rather than religiously (though not without intolerance). And because the subject matter of its politics is the economic life of the people this age is obsessed with problems of participation in government where previous ages were only concerned to justify escape from the burdens of government. Political problems may or may not be more difficult now than they were when Cromwell restated in deeds a constitution that had never properly been stated in words, or when the British Jacobins endeavoured to state rights for those who had only known duties. But never in the history of the world have political problems concerned so many. And never have so many participated critically in the conduct of the powerful few.

This should be, then, an age of political education and creative criticism. Yet looking through the phenomena of mass behaviour, or misbehaviour, that have disfigured the last two decades, who can say confidently that we are not in the grip of the uncritically authoritarian—or the equally uncritical anti-authoritarian ? Certainly it is a critical age in one sense, because it is suspended between the possibility of future creation and dispirited relapse

into apathy and stagnation. But hopeful indications, in the Anglo-Saxon world at least, are not wanting. Materialistic countries like England and the United States of America have shown themselves surprisingly malleable by the forces of intellect and personality; and, withal, unexpectedly susceptible to ideals. Of the British it is true to say, as Aristotle said truly among the Greeks, that man is a natural political animal. Although the opportunities of expression are vastly fewer than the apparatus of expression would lead one to suppose, and although careers are less open than ever to the talents which are now so easily generated, yet the individual does feel himself to be a politician, and a participant in politics, to a degree never achieved by any but the best connected of his ancestors. And, amidst all his misfortunes, he is fortunate that the world presents to him now ample opportunity for a speculation which is no longer academic but practical.

He sees going on in front of him experiments in a political science which is no longer utopian, and whose ideal state has given place to the state with an ideal. The laws of politics are no longer in heaven (that is all too evident!): and what once were academic possibilities stated in terms of liberty, equality and fraternity have become urgent demands, and the subjects of large scale actual experiment. Modern political thinking is enriched by a quantity of new empirical experiences. But it is also embarrassed by that richness, and obscured by the grandiose schemes that new promoters of ideal companies are floating before the public. The public, moreover, is intimately affected by these developments. Better qualified than his ancestors for political speculation, the modern man in the street has greater burdens on his capacity for speculation. What he does not, cannot, sufficiently realize is the truth that these dreams and practices, these realities and unrealities, concern him more vitally than thought has ever concerned humanity. Does he, then, realize how important it is for him to diagnose his own ills, and to know the weakness and strength of his own commonwealth?

If there is one country in the world which should not be shaken

by the blast of scepticism and the barrage of ideology, that country is England. England, the oldest and most experienced of political entities, should be in a position to distinguish between logical processes and actual processes, between tendencies in political reform and doctrinaire ideals. Certainly, many modern changes are novel changes ; but if England really studies its own recent history, it will be less exposed to surprise by the emergence, from the heart of society, of forces which to the politically inexperienced are strange and revolutionary.

To England there has been vouchsafed more than the comfortable examples of continental misfortune. For England herself has, in the last century, suffered political changes which themselves are object lessons, though for the larger part of that period they may have escaped observation. In considering a phenomenon like Communism or Totalitarianism, the Englishman should first consider the inroads that have been made, in England, on Individualism and Democracy. He need not turn his eyes away from England. Nevertheless he is well advised to do so, because through foreign examples, with their differences of detail, he can more easily recognize the essentials amidst the inessentials of his own system. And he is fortunate in being able to survey the abnormalities of continental politics, because, in the pathological and abnormal, in politics as in biology, there is revealed the operation of functions which are concealed in the healthy and normal. What is important in political, as in biological, education is that the abnormal shall not be regarded as something distinct and remote from one's own (therefore normal) state.

In the last half century England has slowly, and agedly, travelled a long way towards ideals that politically younger and precocious nations have attempted to achieve more rapidly. There has been some imitation of foreign example. But the greater acceleration has been due to war. British wars have been peculiarly progressive in their effects and remarkably instructive in the midst of destruction. The regimentation of war, the conscription and the emergency legislation, bring England nearer to the

continent and reveal how far she is from it.

The last war was England's first experience of war as society in a state of war, rather than the spectacular exploits of mercenary armies. Consequently the last war involved a measure of what can only be called socialization. The present war is the same process to a higher degree of integration. But there is a profound difference. The last war well-nigh perfected the external forms of collectivism. This war is much more collectivist in spirit. The last war was sufficiently individualistic, sufficiently dedicated to an economy of reward, to end in the cry of "Homes for Heroes." This war will end in a demand for homes for cowards; and thereby will prove itself a juster war. And the peace that follows it will be a firmer peace, dedicated to the vindication and preservation of the weak; because it is particularly in respect of the survival of those that need help to survive that civilization differs from barbarity, human nature from a crueller nature, red in tooth and claw.

This war happens to be a less selfish undertaking than any previous British or world-campaign. And this undertaking coincides with changes in political thought from the self-centred to the communal. That change as a mental operation is not a new one. What is new is the fact that it now permeates millions of brains instead of the isolated minds of a Rousseau, a Mill, or a Lasalle. The intellectual atmosphere has become progressively more receptive to the changes in emphasis which a communal outlook involves. What is dangerous in this is that, when the war ceases, the underlying purpose of social effort may appear to be removed, and the field will be open to those who have plausible conceptions of the purpose of society.

This is an age when the revolutionary thinker has come into his own without the aid of political revolution. This is also an age in which what once were regarded as sins are accepted as the consequences of permissible heresy. Departures from the standard of conduct required by convention are justified now under the paramount refusal to take institutions seriously. If there is obedience, if there is an absolute, it is found in the

immediate "job." Imagine, in this age, an England peopled by men and women relaxed from vital effort, an England peopled with a returning soldiery, unemployed, uninterested, destined, if care is not taken, to become soldiers of misfortune. To these ideals may well appear as salvation. But woe betide the land when those ideals are seen to be dependent on a social purpose which no longer exists, on hopes that have lost their incisiveness, and only the technique of regimentation remains. That is why ideals are in demand on the present political market. But it must be remembered that the atmosphere which is favourable to ideals is favourable also to hysteria. Over-excitement followed by disappointment is even more dangerous than continuous apathy. Therefore it behoves politicians to look carefully at their ideals. The gift horses that they offer to the public may reveal faults in the mouth when many are astride them, unable to dismount. To look at the gift horses, or hobby horses, of politics is the function of criticism.

Criticism applied to a set of ideals like Communism is of the deepest significance. For Communism, a restatement of political institutions in the light of ends that have hitherto been ignored, is itself an acute criticism of society, so acute that it offers a temptation eventually to the critic to take refuge in an absolute which may be anything (the Army, or the nation, for example) and which transcends criticism. This is the danger to be avoided, par excellence, because it is essentially in the refusal to surrender to absolutes that individuality in its best sense consists.

There is profound justification for a critical approach to the programme of Communism, or of Socialism generally, in the thought that the ideals of these systems, abstracted from the theoretical and technical setting, appear (truly) to be the ideals of individualism in the highest sense. The proper social attitude of to-day is not blind herd-instinct. Therefore Communism should not be incompatible with individualism; should come to the individual to fulfil him not to destroy him. A system which purports to do justice to the individual must be critical. Always such a system must balance the parts against the whole.

The individual is an end in himself always; and so long as Democracy regards itself as committed to that doctrine (so long as Democracy is Democracy) the Democratic system must be sceptical of other apparent ultimates.

Democracy in England is reinforced by long traditions of "limited authority," and is more than reinforced, is inspired, by the teachings of those religious thinkers who have taught that man is an end always, never a means, and more, that his oppression can never be justified because there is no end that can justify those means. If British thought draws sustenance from any continental thought on this subject, it derives from thinkers like Goethe and Kant (Germans during Germany's only real enlightenment—and one of them a planner of International Peace!) who taught that the essence of morality was to treat the individual human being as infinitely valuable in himself. It is fitting that these teachings should be revived as the critical answer to the fantastically naive Hegelianism that central Europe has foisted on modern society, and of which the crown and flower is the totalitarian state.

But the critical task of Democracy, the task of criticism, is difficult and delicate. Criticism should not be destructive of ideals, rather appreciative (that is part of its meaning), and ready to recognize the validity of claims by reformers, even if those claims disturb the tranquillity of conventional thought. The essence of Democracy and the essence of criticism is balance. That is not the same as compromise, for balance signifies the resolutely following of what is right once it is accepted as right: a refusal to be deflected by the accidents of expediency. The human mind in recent times has shown its lack of balance by its very readiness to compromise. Criticism has become scepticism. That has happened to men in this age. They have, for many reasons, lost confidence in their own valuations and in the valuations that the new thinkers have taught to them, and, like the readers of advertisements, have accepted any substitute.

In part this is the consequence of the accelerations of life and the expansion of life in this period. The world has put so

much of its store at the feet of the individual, has laid open to him such vast extensions of interest, that he feels dwarfed instead of exalted. At the same time, human psychology is such that when the small differences in life should be smaller than ever, because of the vast common of interest that is open to more and more classes, small differences become greater irritants than ever the big differences were. And if, for a moment, life ceases to expand the world immediately becomes obsessed with graver economic problems than existed when people were poorer.

In part, also, the new thinkers are responsible for the false valuations of the age, because they have underestimated human morality and deemed it necessary to force their thought into human minds by translating it into desires. In doing that they have dissipated those differences that do matter, differences between the heirs of great traditions of human conduct, and the, as yet, untamed humanity of a continent not long emancipated from slavery. In this over simplified attitude, the common factor between peoples is material desire. Consequently men and women have become intensely preoccupied with economic, i.e., the simpler psychologic, needs. These needs a system like Communism, instead of sublimating them into ideals, has attempted to stay with flagons.

This age has, therefore, suffered a travesty. Those who should have been idealists have reverted to materialism in its most material phase—self conscious, self righteous, materialism; have become concerned with human behaviour from the point of view of the lowest human demands, not of the highest. England, among others, has adopted economism in politics and hedonism in individual life. Further, the principles of our political economy have not been subordinated to rational ends, because economy can never provide rational ends from its own calculations and measurements, just as Hedonism cannot provide real values. Economy can work out a balance sheet of expenditures, whether those expenditures are good expenditures or are corruption. But if economy tries to find within itself guidance for expenditure, the expenditure will only be corruption.

This is why modern economy tends to be bad even as economy. That it is bad politics goes without saying.

Finally, the phenomenon of the reversion of nations from the peaks of culture back to the herd of the plain is something that must be understood before the merits and changes of a movement like Communism are properly judged. In at least one European country the forms of Socialism have been adapted to the needs of militarism and nationalism. In other countries, the interpretation of purpose is not so easy as to justify confidence that the ends pursued have been ideal ones. And there is more in the mental trend than mere reversion. What we hate so much is not only brutal; it is a brute fact—and very important. Therein lies the most critical of critical considerations. There is a temptation to accept the phenomenon of totalitarianism as a necessary stage in the evolution of a socialist world. Just as cynical materialism may be a stage in the emancipation of individuals from archaic authorities, so Bureaucracy and Regimentation may be a stage in the perfection of Democracy. Surely the most dangerous of all stages this. Total war may prove to be this mediate stage, and the end of the war may see the disappearance of danger. But, in any event, the war is teaching us to realize that it is the problem of technique, the problem of socialist or Communist totalitarianism, rather than of Communism proper, the problem of selfishness rather than the problems of unselfishness, which economic, psychological, and other historic causes have combined to present to England in this paradoxical age.

CHAPTER II.

COMMUNIST ENGLAND AND CAPITALIST RUSSIA.

WE have treated Communism as a degree of development of the movement which is called Socialism ; and we shall see that England has evolved in modern times a high degree of Socialism so rapidly as to make the word evolve appear inept. The age of individualism seems very remote in history. Thanks to the accelerations of modern machinery, including the machinery of the State, political life has come throughout the world to resemble a vast economic organization on joint stock lines. Thanks to communications, including education and the use of money, the people participate more than ever in the life of this organization. Government has ceased to be the claim of a few individuals to control the masses against their will.

Yet, in the modern corporative State (the Joint Stock State, we have called it), the relative powers of directors and shareholders can vary along a gamut ranging from despotism to free institutions. Nor is the expectation fulfilled that with the articulation of the people's interests life becomes freer. Quantitative increases seem to carry unpredictable changes with them. Increased scope becomes increased obligation—not emancipation. Increased representation comes to mean less independence, not more. Individuals that have survived are powerful corporations and millionaire enterprisers, men that " are hosts unto themselves —are lions."

In a World machine-shopped and pay-rolled, mass-produced and mass-controlled, the face of Socialist politics is changed—so that the issue is no longer between Socialism and Individualism,

but between tyrannical Socialism and libertarian Socialism, between Fascism and the values of Democracy. In this conflict, the position of England seems to be describable as Democracy both strengthened and weakened by Socialism; the Russian position as a Communism or Socialism which has shown signs of reverting at times to State—if not to party—Capitalism and tyranny, but has redeemed its claim to idealism by the spontaneity and universality of its moral efforts in war.

Theoretically there is no contradiction between Communism and Democracy, but in practice there can be disharmony. Theoretically, Communism expresses one aspect of Democracy. not to the detriment of other aspects. Starting from the definition given by Lincoln—a statesman who prophesied better than he knew—we find that Democracy implies government "of the people"—that is to say, not enslavement of the people—"by the people"—*id est*, with the aid of representative government —"for the people"—that means with social purpose paramount to the anarchic purposes of individuals. Yet, in a mature democracy, we find that it is the standards of the individual that prevail. We find that one paramount social purpose consists in the preservation of the values and virtues of the individual. And, on the other side, it may come about that an obsession with the social purpose involves a nation in such a sacrifice of individual values as to make the resultant life a thing meaningless and empty. It must be remembered that the primary values hypostatized by history consist in the sanctity and significance of individual life. That is the ultimate and permanent contribution to truth that the monotheistic religions have preached to the world until the world has accepted it, at least in appearance.

Somewhere, therefore, in Democracy, in that area of individuality on which the State does not impinge; somewhere in the being of the State itself, when it recognizes its limits and the fact that it is smaller than Society; somewhere in the spirit of free institutions, there are enshrined principles of objective justice (however transient the values and the circumstances) expressed in an ethical predicate that can be attributed as a

criterion to the acts of governments and individuals alike. In this unpragmatic world the end does not justify the means, unless the end happens to be the immediate preservation of the very ethos of Society from destruction at the hands of anarchic enemies. And then Democracy sacrifices its liberties, but does so in the knowledge and belief that the sacrifice is justified, and is not permanent.

When, however, a Society is only concerned with its being as an aggregate, and the economic welfare of its majority party, then that Society can sacrifice the means to the end ; can adopt in its domestic and its foreign political policy a certain Jesuitry, a certain cynical disregard of ultimates because of the immediate ; and this under the mysterious formula that those immediate purposes, however crude, are the degrees that will be transmuted in the ultimate ideal. That involves a metaphysic and a mystical attitude that may or may not be well grounded in the nature of things ; but it is also responsible for what, to the unsophisticated, appears remarkably like political chauvinism and seems at least partly responsible for our present discontents.

Certainly, at such a level, Communism is not Democratic, because Democracy is fundamentally ethical. Perhaps it is also true to say that, at such a stage, Communism is not fully Communistic. The whole process is suggestive of a Marxian formula. If the ideal of Democracy or Socialism is a synthesis of individualism (as expressed in representative government) with collective purposing, it is possible, in the early stages of the political process, that the two functions which are destined to harmonize will, for some time, conflict. That conflict is not a quarrel between two countries like England and Russia. It is an internal conflict in the moral and political economy of each individual country. If other nations enter into it, they do so accidentally and usefully, because they are the examples and the (not base) material of a tremendously important political experiment.

II.

To present day England the sub-continent which is Russia affords a vital political object lesson. In order to understand this lesson, however, a temperate attitude must be adopted, which is neither sycophantic nor hostile. It must be remembered that there are many differences between Russia and England which are relatively accidental differences; and, though these persist in being real enough, there is reason to suppose that, just as historic forces create roughnesses, so they eventually bring about smoothnesses, in human institutions. It must be remembered also that there are similarities of ethic and of institution between England and Russia that are apt to escape observation, as the people of a country famous for compromise and understatement contemplates the classic land of bloodthirsty exaggeration.

As to the differences, it must be remembered that England is politically very much older than Russia; is indeed, the oldest political organism in the modern world. Until a date which is not beyond living memory, a high proportion of the population of Russia consisted of serfs, virtually slaves. (Not that slavery was unknown elsewhere in the 1860's !). Between 1860 and 1917, through alternations of benevolent and malevolent despotism, the Russians achieved some very small part of the political progress that seven or eight hundred years of political struggle and experiment had given to England. The Russians were endeavouring in a very short time to attain ideals which other countries had partly achieved in long periods, with the aid of more than one revolution. Thus in 1917 the Bolsheviks undertook a political programme which included franchises of a type that England knew about in the thirteenth century, emancipations which England had already achieved even before the execution of Charles the First, a revolution in the status of the people which had been politically confirmed for Western Europe by the French Revolution; and on top of all these abolitions of despotic power and privilege, they further attempted what no previous revolution had seriously contemplated (because the problem had not been

urgently stated)—the abolition of State Religion and private property.

The most important observation that emerges from this is that Russia was forced to embark on a difficult, laborious, course of highly complicated social organization and Socialist progress (of which the criterion is complexity) without ever having enjoyed any real experience of representative government, other than the abortive comic opera Dumas. The clear result is that Russia has developed one aspect of the Democratic ideal in some degree, and enjoys only the very slightest degree of its other aspect. In the long run, the development of social purpose in industry and agriculture will involve (has already involved) some representation of the workers, if only on syndicalist lines. Up to the present, however, it is true to say of Russia that her political organization, as distinct from her economic organization, is top-heavy; that she has the top of Democracy, without the bottom; an idea of freedom that has not yet "broadened down," ideals without the foundation of institutions "broad based upon the people's will."

Granted the political immaturity of Russia, one understands the appearance of unhealthy precocity (or arrested development) that attaches to many Russian utterances and undertakings. The revolutionary genesis of her modern political organization explains, though it does not mitigate, many of the seemingly unnecessary violences that have marked the progress of the present regime. A phenomenon like the political purge is explicable in an immature country, as it is explicable in over-ripe and perverted countries. It is not, however, necessary for friends of Russia to attempt to justify as Holy Inquisition what may have been Palace Revolution or wars of succession. Again, one can understand, if not pardon, the official Atheism of the Communist party when one remembers that the Revolution involved an emancipation from the corruptions of a clericalism which has long been forgotten by the citizens of the almost Erastian West; and finally, the appearance of totalitarianism may be pardonable in a country which is undertaking a revolution not only of politics but of economic life.

III.

Totalitarianism is a function within Socialism requiring to be controlled ; its dangers represent a stage in the evolution of the Socialist State. The real criticism of the totalitarian is psychological ; that he sees totality in everything. There is nothing mediate in his world. He lacks the sense of proportion which discriminates between the important and the unimportant. Every moment under every aspect of the life of his community is vital. Every offence is, therefore, capital ; every failure criminal. He lives under a constant and comprehensive military necessity. It need hardly be said that such a system is only politically possible when it is mediated by the arbitrary will of the Dictator himself. The dictator makes totalitarianism politically possible, and Democracy impossible, for Democratic law knows not the necessities which determine dictatorship. Thus, in circumstances which called for a more integrated political effort than is normal, Russia became a dictatorship. We shall only know whether Russia is a totalitarian state if the dictatorship ends as Cromwell's dictatorship ended—in a handing over of power to the people, or whether it follows eventually the course set by examples that disfigure in too many places the pages of history.

Russian Communism, then, is said to differ from English Socialistic Communistic tendencies as a revolution differs from a process of evolution. The tempo of modern change is, however, sufficiently violent to make reliance on that distinction unsafe for the beneficiaries of English invested interests. Nevertheless, there are substantial theoretical and traditional differences which will, in the long run, count for more than differences of fashion and sentiment. England (according to thought, which it is hoped, is not wishful) still refrains from stating the whole business of life as economic. Consequently England is less likely than other countries to accept a doctrine which is concerned to make Society the expression of a class interest. English Social Reform has never accepted that description. England is not immune from the class war, but she has resources that should enable her to

avoid it. It may well be that an undertaking like the present war will bring about without revolution the stage at which everybody realizes that we are all workers. Once that stage is attained the class war disappears, and with it the belief in an international class war preached by exponents who have declared it to be inevitable and to be encouraged.

England has no need for one-class rule; nor, we hope, for totalitarianism. Yet, as a nation socializes itself the danger of totalitarianism increases. Totalitarianism (we have seen) is the technique of socialism without the spirit; and England has, in recent years, acquired so much socialistic technique, and seemed at one time to have lost so much of its Liberalism, and to have gained so little social outlook, that the expression "Totalitarian England" was more than a jibe. Even to-day a benevolently despotic government, working through Civil Service controls and direct radio propaganda, suggests possibilities that do not bear thinking upon. The problem for modern England is the danger of a short-circuit of her overloaded and delicate system; indeed the crucial problem of whether a democratic society can achieve the apparent perfection of a thorough socialism without breaking down into despotic anarchy. That the progress is possible is evidenced by the fact that, at the present, when Democracy is suffering its greatest strain, the spirit of Democracy is militant if not triumphant.

IV.

If unrevolutionary Communism exists or comes to exist in the world, then certainly, England is or will be the place of its appearance. That is no novelty. One hundred years ago the traveller and litterateur, Kinglake, speaking of the French Communists of that period, remarked that there was plenty of Communism in English institutions. Those were despotic days, made tolerable by charity and philanthropy. A paternal government contrived to be at once oppressive and helpful to the people. Those were the days in which Isaac D'Israeli protested against the slavery of human beings condemned to wheel and spin, the days when two

nations existed in the heart of one, days which were characterized by the inequalities that inspired the indignant novels, and later the reforms, of Benjamin D'Israeli, the creator of benevolent Toryism. One is reminded that the Russia of Tolstoy was not without conservative idealists, and possessed what England was too advanced to possess—a certain Communistic life among the peasantry (reminiscent of our old Open Field System) in the darkest days of Czardom. That tradition has made possible the success of the Collective Farm, just as Tory philanthropy facilitated the growth of English State-controlled industrialism to its present complexity.

In countries other than Russia, and notably in England, the nineteenth century saw reform as Individualism. Even the ideals of the Chartists were fundamentally individualistic; and the moral support that the Chartists obtained from the great Whigs, from Macaulay and John Bright, was only limited by the speculative possibility that a too wide franchise might involve an ultimate attack on the principles of private property. In so far as Chartism, or any other of the reform movements that agitated political thought in those days, implied a demand for the redistribution of property, that demand was not urgent. Nor did that demand disturb the belief of that period that all economic evils could be cured by the unshackling of economic life from restrictions. The position of England was too dominant economically for people to be able to conceive limits to prosperity. There was no conception yet of economic problems that could only be solved by international agreement. And there was no conception of municipal planning.

Government interference, good and bad, diminished as the nineteenth century advanced. Even the protests against acknowledged evils, like the abuse of money lending, seemed to lose their urgency, and the practices became less restricted. In the England of Herbert Spencer the state was a policeman, appointed to maintain a rudimentary law and order and to do nothing else. That same period was one of great capitalistic expansion under the formula of Free Trade, which, we now

realize, was possible only because of England's highly favoured historical position. America was not fully exploited yet, and was destined to delay its mercantile development for a generation by Civil War; and Japanese industry did not yet exist. From this period date the triumphs of Representative Government—very uncommunistic. Yet little over half a century was to elapse before highly unindividualistic ideals had been fulfilled.

As the nineteenth century waned, a new spirit developed in England. Freedom of Contract went too far. The Government, instead of being a policeman, was now strangely metamorphosed into a guardian; became the mother (rather than the father) of the people. The State emerged and became the custodian of orphans, the guardian of lunatics, the teacher and the social guide, the purveyor of public health, the maker of roads, the great bridge builder. The tide of idealism was flowing higher on the sands of politics. The State began to interfere in life, to make rules of "thou shalt" instead of merely "thou shalt not." Taxation was becoming recognized as a permanent factor in public life. The repression of liberty which this Socialization, this rudimentary Communism, entailed was, however, offset by a vast increase in personal liberty due to transport, to education, and to the increased circulation of that greatest means of Communication and self-expression, which is Money.

The last Great War, which spread government effort through Society, socialized England quite thoroughly, and the socialistic institutions which were then developed came to stay. It is significant that the "great architect of victory" in that war enjoyed a taste for National Insurance and social service; and our present leader Churchill also drank in those Beveridges in his liberal youth; and together they were leaders of a strange, unfortunate, army; for, on a wide front, the forces of Liberalism were surrendering to more advanced ideals, and eventually abandoned *laissez faire* to claimants only qualified to abuse it.

In consequence, during the last two decades, it has become a commonplace of English radicalism (modern conservatism, for our parties shift leftwards) that the State is too much with us.

The better criticism, perhaps, was that "getting and spending, we laid waste our powers." Suffice it to say that the period of economic crisis which culminated in the present Great War emphasized even more the tendency of the State to interest itself (not always intelligently) in economic life and to overdevelop its economic aspects. The present Great War, which has revealed to the world values higher than the economic, has also accelerated the progress of Society towards the high degree of social economic integration which is Communism proper.

An income tax approximating asymptotically to 20/- in the £1, a control of all wealth and expenditure, immense possibilities of government requisition hardly different from nationalization of land and industry; with very little new in the way of legislation, England could be rendered quite as communistic as Russia, and few would notice the economic difference. The only important political difference might be the continuance of some free institutions, and, mainly, that which has yet to emerge from the class struggle of Russia—a high degree of representative government.

But legal and constitutional differences should not be overestimated. If the fault of the age is an obsession with material wealth, if the golden age of Liberalism has passed, leaving greed and self-seeking behind it, then there is no virtue in legal forms that will prevent any political organism, however old, from degenerating into the clash of factions. In our time, we have seen the failure of at least one good system of laws—the Weimar Constitution—to say nothing of the constitutions of all the best Latin Republics. These had everything—Checks, Balances, Representation. They lacked only the support of political experience, of traditions, of a good spirit. But now traditions are easily dissipated, as education and growth become faster processes. And unless traditions continue to exist in England, and operate to prevent the complete materialization of the people, then England is in at least as much danger of totalitarianism as are the probably less materially minded Russians. The best institutions are apt to be short-circuited, and with them the best

ideals. Then, given what we have (of necessity), all the paraphernalia of regimentation, it behoves us to consider wherein that virtue lies which shall save us from psychological regimentation and preserve those individualistic values with which Cromwell and his Puritans saved the England of the seventeenth century.

V

Significantly there has been in Russia, in the pre-war period, evidence of the recognition of a truth that England may be forgetting; that a Communistic world needs the values of individualism even more than does an individualistic world. For in the individualistic world there is a certain struggle for survival which brings out qualities of character that make people survive. But in the protected world of Socialism there operates a certain entropy by which standards fall to averages, and averages progressively sink; in which one person finds himself constitutionally unable to do more than another; in which maximum wages are always becoming minima, and minima of hours maxima. In those circumstances, it is interesting to observe that Russia saved herself industrially and agriculturally by a reversion to the methods of modified capitalism. The Russian worker became at least as much of a Capitalist as the English workman—and that is something considerable.

Briefly, modern Russia arrived at a compromise according to which people could earn and own; could own everything except land and industrial capital; and the Commune looked forward to days when people would eat irrespective of their work and nobody would own anything. Perhaps the compromise is truer to life than the ideal. A logic operates among ideals which does not determine the more empirical facts of life. The problem of politics is to rule a bad, unreliable, world as well as a good one; a good as carefully as a bad. In so far as it ignores these facts the system of Communism is based on an over-simplification. The system is true for the facts that it accounts for; but it does not exhaust reality.

If Society is seen steadily and whole, for what it is, as well as hopes to be, then it will be seen that the Communist account arbitrarily isolates a certain factor. Secondly, that it treats that factor (the economic) in an unreal way. Granted that private ownership has led to abuses, it does not follow from this that the basis of value is labour and that nobody shall own except what he both earns and needs. It was from such a theory that bad faults in private ownership developed. The important business of the world is the control of capital, not the abolition of individuality; and in that control there may be even room for much private ownership; and it is arguable that the private owner is a less dangerous person than the State as owner—at least until the State has demonstrated its title to trust.

Whatever be the truth as to that, it is true to say that the empty abolitionism of Marx is the result of an obsession with ownership, just as the empty Egalitarianism that followed the French Revolution was the result of an obsession with privilege. Yet nobody claims now that there is not in the world a legitimate function of privilege protecting people in the discharge of their duties though not in the abuse of their powers. Similarly, had Marx learned Communism from the English examples of Robert Owen and others, instead of in the British Museum, which is the source of Communist theory, he would have been awake to the realities of a world in which Capital is an integral function.

We have seen that Capital exists wherever anyone, or any group, has the means of controlling time. It exists in the form of animals and machinery. It also exists in the form of money, which is a function of control over (if only by measurement of) the resources of human nature and labour, but unfortunately has become localized and monopolized. The same principles that operate in a Capitalist state operate in a Communist state. The number of ergs or footpounds which are expended by the Community must be recovered by the Community; the railway (as an integral factor, if not as an isolated system) must show a surplus. And in the organization of life so as to show a profit, one draws a balance sheet which, however one states it, inevitably contains a capital

account that can never be completely depersonalized.

The experience of Russia is the experience of practical economics, modifying the exaggerations of true ideals. There the ideals of Communism have " come true," and the theory has in part " come false." What has happened in Russia is not the reversion from Communism to Capitalism; but the recognition that practical Communism is not the over-simplification of economics which the theorists have made it. If anything, its state control is a more difficult system than alternative systems. That is why Communism as taught by Marx—or rather the Marxians, one is reminded of " Darwinians "—has been driven to changes of programme which appear quite revolutionary.

It is equally true, however, that Capitalistic England and France have been driven to approaches to Communism which are wise, but which entail better organization and a better spirit than they have so far enjoyed. In particular, they require, if possible in greater degree, the resurrection, or reawakening, of those dead or dormant qualities which at the worst periods of recent British history have still preserved the essential goodness of the nation, even when ethical predicates seemed very unimportant in the context of State. And they require, further, that that State to which lost individuals are looking for redemption shall become less mechanized, more humanized, than the Frankenstein monsters which modern alchemy so easily creates.*

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*The paradox is worth noting that Communism in England, as expressed in the Communist party, was (rightly or wrongly) suspect as to its political allegiance. In Russia, however, it was demonstrated that, given an acceptance of certain values, there is nothing in Communism incompatible with patriotism. The contrast shows that Communism does not worship the State, but can, and normally should, be loyal to it. Let it be remembered that Stalingrad, originally Tsaritsin, has shown two loyalties in its history, and has now shown that they are not incompatible.

CHAPTER III.

JOINT STOCK STATE.

I.

THE common factor between political entities so distinct from each other as a Democratic government and a Totalitarian government is to be found in the old and new concept of the State.

The State is one of those functions which, having been outgrown and discarded, reappears transvalued at what people are pleased to call a " higher " level. We have seen something of that synthesis of contraries which conjures ancient despotism back to life, ostensibly to express a demand for more freedom than democracy appears to provide ; and we have seen that the ancient despotism tends to be the more dynamic and vital element in the new symbiosis. Particularly is that true when the development takes place in a context of culture which is nearer to the barbaric in time than our own. The civilization of no part of the world can be said to be more than skin deep ; but there are parts of the epidermis that are thinner than others. Through these a crude reality is more easily seen.

The evolution of modern despotism in England is different from its sudden manifestation on the continent, because there it is the reappearance of something that has hardly been hidden below the surface ; here it has been a process of purposive development, so useful in many ways that the " new despotism " appears only accidentally despotic. But just as, in the generation of electric power, we know that the coils can generate independent fields of force, operating across the wires rather than along them, so we know that the bureaucratic element in modern organization can create its own life and its own tyranny. Similarly despotism

lurks, as a dangerous potential, in the masses of human beings subordinate to mass industrial organization, which started as simple employment. But the danger of short-circuit is stronger when there are forces operating from outside. Or, to change the metaphor, the risk of disease in our system is heightened by the constant transmission of germs from a plague ridden continent.

The danger is mediated by imitation. The modern generations seem to grow up faster as life accelerates. They are less conscious of tradition. I do not use the word tradition in the way that it is used by a land-owner sentimentally defending his right to coal royalties. In a more important sense than this people are out of touch with tradition, because the population is bigger, because it grows faster, because individuals grow up faster, and because there is less leisure of the untired kind that makes for culture. Consequently there obtains an average of superficial thought and mechanical behaviour. This is an atmosphere in which plausible ideas are learned easily, and bad tastes are easily acquired. Those who live in this routine are not sufficiently conscious of heritage to realize that, beneath the superficial resemblances of their needs and interests to the needs and interests of others, there is concealed a vast divergence of history and character. Indeed, it is not easy for the half educated denizen of England to realize how far he is removed from the half educated denizens of Germany or Rumania. As wage slaves and fornicators they appear to have everything in common. As machine men they enjoy a similar conception of efficiency and authority. And their participation in the affairs of their country has been made sufficiently ineffective for English workers not to know the difference between real democracy and the paper constitutions that are so easily relegated to the salvage heap of "scraps of paper."

The challenge to Democracy comes then, from within and without, at a time when resistance is low. Moreover, what requires to be defended is a notion so easily reduced to abstraction that its meaning is desperately hard to maintain. The fact that this shade of meaning embodies 600 years of political struggle, social trial and error, seems to correspond to no significance at

all in a world which has no time for anything but the immediately significant. Tied as they are to the mill, modern slaves are apt to forget their class distinctions, are apt to forget their ancient hopes of succeeding to an aristocratic heritage. This oblivion is made easy when they know that their heritage is, in any event, flooded over and mortgaged.

II.

The historic difference which is in danger of disappearing consists in a very simple fact; that Democracy is a free system. So far as the State is concerned, Democracy really acknowledges no State. The government, to Democrats, expresses one of many sets of interests which impinge on human personality, mould it, and are moulded by it. The State is only a reality in the sense in which the Church is a reality, or the Trade Union, or the local public house. State importance means unimportance in a system which does not recognize the existence of "political offenders" and which has no political police. If there is status in this Democratic world it is not political status. If there is necessity it is not political necessity. That is why Democrats intransigently refuse to understand totalitarianism, to understand the military necessity which that system embodies, to understand the unspeakable barbarity of total war.

In theory and tradition England knows no State. Consequently the development in England of a vast State machine is a revolution in our life and thought. But the reception of it is distinguished by the firm belief, on the part of the governors as well as of the governed, that this State machine is an intrusion on human privacy, only justified so long and in so far as it expresses the urgent needs of the human beings whose privacy it invades. That belief is the verbal expression of a tradition which is in danger because traditions are at a discount. It is endangered even by its reduction to words, because words are easily generalized away; and few words are easier to get rid of than Democracy.

Democracy must not be treated as a word descriptive of a form of government, because it is more than a form of government.

It is the content of a system of life of which the government is only part and knows itself to be part. The reality of government, rather than the form which democracy expresses, consists in the fact that we have been governed by people who are conscious that they are servants not masters, and that their service involves the acceptance of standards like justice, equity, mercy, tolerance, which, being embodied in men, prevent them from becoming tyrants or the instruments of tyranny. Consequently it is absurd to speak of Democracy as if it meant franchise or the empty machinery of representative government.

Representative government is part of the mechanism of a system which preserves Democracy. But the Democracy which representative government preserves is not the correspondence of so many members to so many electors. What the machinery of representation preserves is those ideals which live in the people and which live in the representatives because these are also of the people. If the representative is regarded as someone who, in concert, or conspiracy, with others, makes laws and makes what laws he likes, and is only influenced in so doing by the short duration of his office and the lack of courage that prevents him from legislating himself into perpetual tenure of power, then he is indeed a representative, but he is no part of Democratic government.

Democracy is not the counting of heads. Democracy consists in the heads that are counted. That, incidentally, expresses whatever truth there is in the doctrine of the Common Will, which Rousseau described as the foundation of Democracy. The Common Will is not created or affected by the counting of majorities and ignoring of minorities. But in the act of persuasion, that sometimes influences a vote and always influences the minority—in that the rationality of the decision saves the minority from desperation—in that persuasive process consists the whole representativeness of any representative assembly. But if persuasion becomes mechanical, or merely financial, than force is operating, not consent, and the General Will is in abeyance.

If, then, the people (including their representatives) enjoy a

heritage of ideals and traditions and standards and wise laws and valued institutions, and if their representatives continue to act in some conformity to them, then the government is Democratic. The fact that the government makes new laws is, or should be, a very unimportant fact in the description of such a government. Certainly a system in which the changing of the law is more important than the stability of the mass of the system is not likely to be Democratic. And this is to be said of England: that, though modern legislation seems to outweigh in mass, and exceed in volume, all previous laws and declarations of constitution, and statements of principle, and the whole of English political philosophy and history written out *in extenso*, yet the qualitative changes in tradition wrought by even the most modern and streamlined of British governments do not yet amount to a serious significant change in British institutions.

III.

The lesson taught by the last war, but only learned at the outset of this, is the old lesson that the machine conquers the man, that routine supersedes principle. The State finds itself no longer a mere constable, no longer even a parent to the people, but an immense Joint Stock Company, whose Memorandum is loose, whose Articles are obscure, but whose paramount purpose is, generally, to deal, in some way or other, good or bad, with an area of interest which now occupies most of the lives of most of the people. In this Company the rights of the shareholder are negligible, even though his benefits are said to be immense. He enjoys, as vaguely as the shareholder in a railway company, the right of stepping on to the lines and getting run over by the Company's train. He also has the right to buy a first class season ticket, just as he has the right to charter a suite of rooms at the Station's luxury hotel.

The dividends that he obtains are real, but not very noticeable. But the " calls " are becoming increasingly heavier, so that his dividends appear even smaller. But what enrages him is the

fact that the Company's servants (called Civil Servants because of their incivility) seem to behave as if the machine was more important than its purpose, and was doing nothing of any significance in the beneficiary's life. Therefore, he constantly complains to the Directors ; or rather kept on complaining until he stopped from sheer exhaustion.

Here, in the Directorate of the Company, the critic finds chaos. At one time the Directors were elected by the shareholders for purposes that were clear to all. And the Directors regarded it as their duty to manage the Company's affairs in the interests of the shareholders. They selected from among themselves a small Board of Management, and they sat in constant vigilance, in a perpetual meeting of Directors which was Parliament, in order to guide and control the Board of Management. But two developments in the affairs of the Company have completely changed all that. First, the grandiose schemes which the Company has undertaken have assumed such an appearance of complexity that the average Director is incapable of contributing to any discussion of detail. And once he is out of touch with the details he ceases to be highly qualified for the discussion of principle. Consequently he leaves everything to the smaller Board of Management, and occupies himself by mechanically approving of what they do, or mechanically disapproving.

Meanwhile the managing directors, and some few large shareholders who are not directors at all, have acquired such importance and such influence among the shareholders, that they induce the shareholders to elect, *en masse*, quantities of directors whose only function is to approve by their vote the conduct of the Board of Management. So that the Board of Management, operating through the Company's servants, and using rights of "call" granted to them by a more or less imbecile directorate, completely controls every aspect of the Company's activities and decides what are to be its undertakings. This in political terms is Cabinet despotism ; and the voting technique achieved by the management has resulted in an acquisition of power and privilege by the Company's servants (admittedly in discharge of their duty, but

a duty which is admittedly extensive) and this is called bureaucracy; and one great lawyer has been so unkind as to call it Ministerial Despotism.

The second development has taken place in the attitude of the shareholders who, incidentally, have increased in number. Briefly, they have forgotten the creation and origin of the Company in which they participate, and have become exclusively interested in those aspects of its activities which concern their economic well being; and since, for the most part, they are short-sighted, if not narrowly selfish, they are only interested in the very immediate economic benefits which flow consequentially from the Company's operations. Thus it comes about that various shareholders' organizations, bodies with an ancient and honourable history, and which have many times been valuable for focussing the good opinion of the public, have become mechanical collecting agencies for shareholders' votes; and these votes are used to return guinea pig directors to support, by proxy or by absence, a programme which is blind acceptance, or blind rejection, of whatever the management proposes or merely does.

It follows that the reasoned discussion of detail or principle in the light of old policy, e.g., the policy referred to as justice, or equity, or tolerance, or mercy, or even wisdom, no longer takes place. Instead, the mechanical acceptance of a balance sheet. If the directors find before them a programme which may be described as Communism, rather than Capitalism, they will not demur to it on the ground that it is too difficult for the management. They are used now to assuming that the management is omnipotent and omniscient. But they will consider it as a purely economic proposition which they will accept or reject if the management has decided already to accept it, and which they know that the shareholders who voted for them (through the vote collecting agencies) will accept or reject because they, too, are only concerned with the economic side of the Company's prospectus. If they have any other thought, it is directed to the use, the only use, to which that prospectus will be put. For the main purpose of this publicity is to influence the possible invest-

ments of foreigners in the Company's Preferences.

Now all this machinery of economic organization sounds very different from the regimentation of the country, uneconomically, in order to indulge the lust of a leader for military power. But to an unsophisticated outsider, from a more intelligent planet, such as Jupiter, it might be very difficult to distinguish the executive machinery of the two organizations. Here in England we have achieved the perfect Board of Management—and the One Party State! The process of legislative deliberation has for so long been an unreality that when a piece of political chicanery finally established a coalition government in office, completely unhampered (or unassisted) by criticism, no great change was wrought; for, with the ironic exception of the period of regimentation which was the last war, there was no occasion on which members of parliament had let themselves be influenced by the objective merits of a programme since the days when they were moved by the transcendent oratory of William Gladstone.

In this century, following the death of Gladstone, and of Liberalism, and with the magnification of politics beyond its traditions, we pass from the persuasive phase of politics at the level of consent, back to coercive politics with money as the piston or the lever. The difference between Pride's Purge of the Stuart Long Parliament, carried out with the sword, and Baldwin's gleichschaltung of the Modern Long Parliament, financed by party organizations, differ in degree rather than kind. When the money lenders took over politics, the people lost interest.

In the general case, when the State becomes an economic organization, and when the people become economic automata, reality and objectivity and real idealism pass out of politics. The party system reduces politics to the pragmatic. This is not to say that the world requires the abolition of party. The fault in politics is, on the contrary, probably the fact that party has disappeared. Here again is an example of the truth that the political desideratum is not the abolition of differences but their useful perpetuation. Democracy owes much to Party; owes definition and clarity and vigour. Democracy will owe

more to Party if Parties, and that means the electors, cease to behave mechanically in exchange for bread and the varieties of circuses, and recapture, as they do in war, devotion to ideals, and at least an intellectual readiness to consider the problems of the world without reference to their own immediate interests. That is the only possible way in which Democracy can continue to exist under the facade of the Totalitarian State.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW DESPOTISM.

THE result of a century of State development is that now we stand nearer to the eighteenth century, with its Royal Prerogative and government by faction, then we do to the nineteenth century with its theory of government as a minimum condition of an expanding liberty.

There seems to be a periodicity in the evolution of ideas by which the species that were thought to be swept away by general developments emerge again into importance at a higher level. That, incidentally, is the grain of truth in Dialectical Materialism. Its significance is only revealed when the success of a movement like nineteenth century Liberalism ends in political experiment which brings back to life the inveterate psychological difficulties of government, and when a comprehensive movement like Communism settles down and leaves jutting out problems of liberty and equality which it has not succeeded in sweeping away. By reason of some such process we are now back among the problems of the eighteenth century, the problems of faction, unrelieved by patronage and unredeemed by any belief in the sanctity of the distinctions that we find oppressive, and increasingly conscious that our society is at the mercy of what Dr. Johnson called the lowest of all human beings, the party scribbler and the Commissioner of Excise.

A movement in the social evolution that might have been expected to increase liberty has, it is hoped temporarily, diminished it. And this diminution is the more pronounced because the contemporary theory of society tends to regard liberty as an unimportant epiphenomenon of a phase of economic development that has passed. The German warrior who, to euphemize, spits on freedom, personifies the extreme to which the theory can be

carried by those who forget the real purpose of State activity. Even in England we see the effect of the Socialist development in the disregard for freedom that accompanies an increasing Bureaucracy, a log rolling, economistic, trend in legislation, and a changed attitude to justice within and without the law.

The English Law, and especially the machinery of its enforcement in the criminal jurisdiction, is the moving edge of executive power. The Rule, or Rules, of Law, of which we hear the obsequies repeatedly pronounced these days, is the control in the legal system itself which holds back that sharp edge from cutting away the margins of scope and privacy from individual life. In the century that followed Dr. Johnson the Law, which had been oppressive, came to be a protection to the subject rather than an exploitation of it. When in a dark hour (the age of the Combination Laws) an optimistic Law Lord pronounced that " the English Law is a Law of Liberty " he was saying something which, if not true then, was destined to become true, just as our old Magna Carta, designed for the benefit of Barons, ultimately gave salvation to the common people. By a similar strange transvaluation, many old oppressive Laws (such as the prohibition of a prisoner's evidence on account of its probable falsity) became valuable safeguards of liberty as the spirit of the Law changed from the inquisitorial to the litigious. The very formality of the Law, applied against Indictments, mitigated for long the severity in a system of which capital punishment was the typical and normal expression.

And long after the harshnesses of the Law had been abated, and a completely different spirit, more benevolently oppressive, was creeping into the Law, we find ancient formalities being used, in the Law of Bills, the Law of Companies, and the Commercial Law generally, to give a scope and a freedom to the economic individual that was productive of much good as well as of much harm. Only when new doctrines, new emphases, new traditions, new legislation, broke down the formality of the law, was the way open to new encroachments by the State, differently inspired than eighteenth century intrusions, but capable in a bad age of doing more harm than could be done in a more rigid system.

Certainly there have been times since the Napoleonic days when to say that the English Law was a Law of Liberty was true. And even now it is more than a metaphor. Admittedly England does not enjoy, and never has enjoyed, and nobody else has ever enjoyed, that wild unchartered freedom which, in romantic years, set drunken poets ranting their broken backed marching songs. In its most boisterous days British liberty was not the spirit of torrents and mountain streams. The Englishman gets nothing from the mountains except an uncomfortable privacy. But it is equally true to say that English liberty has never been equated with that Stoic notion of consent at the level of consciousness, that submission to volcanic tyranny, that doctrine of acquiescence with which continental slave States have masochistically rationalized their servitude. Even now, after the absorption of the nation's entirety into total effort, the Englishman believes that he is the subject of the Law, not the object.

II.

The highest degree of privacy attained by the subject was attained in the middle period of the nineteenth century, when very few British citizens were economically able to enjoy it, or even knew about it. Legally it seemed perfect, but the law was only expressive of the surface of life. The government was an inexperienced umpire, and any competition which did not involve arbitrary physical violence was legal. But a century of collectivist legislation has changed all that. During this period England has discovered the dangerous notion of the State; and the State is more than "watch and ward." We have seen that the State in England has since come to regard itself as parental, as an enterpriser, as an employer of labour, a planner of towns, a great road maker, and general arch pontifex in the cult of transport. Included in its engineering exploits must be recorded the great inroads it has made on the domains of privacy. A law which contented itself with "thou shalt not" has given place to a law which imposes considerable burdens of positive obligation.

Paradoxically, as the franchise was extended to liberate the people, so the people became less liberated legally than ever before. At first a great increase in public wealth, and in the standard of living of the average person, concealed this, or compensated the loss of legal freedom with a substantial degree of economic or psychological freedom. But as the State and local authorities made inroads into that wealth, and as price levels increased, and the new luxuries became necessities, the Englishman found himself less free than his fathers were, though the majority were *too ignorant* to know it.

The epoch of "communisation" (which is Russian for nationalization and an income tax of 17/6 in the £) abolishes much that was achieved during the period in which Britain evolved (as Russia has not) Representative Government and Ministerial Responsibility. Government for the people has different virtues and different vices from Government by the people; and it is under the former aspect of Democracy that government of the people tends to become oppressive.

The reasons for this are technical; and the technique that is in question appears to be an inevitable characteristic of collectivist legislation. When the law tells a man what not to do (and, notwithstanding verbal possibilities of restatement, there is a clear class of laws of this type), he remains free so long as he refrains from acts which, usually, are recognizably wrong on accepted ethical grounds. If he transgresses, it is normal for the State to undertake to prove against him his transgression, and to accept as a complete answer to any charge his statement (if believed) that he had no wrong intention. But when a man is asked to comply positively with a thousand and one specific requests for obedience, whether to an order to part with his liberty, or his money, or merely to extinguish his lights, then, if he fails, it is impracticable for the enforcing authority to prove against him more than his failure to comply with orders; and it is impracticable for them to accept in respect of offences of this kind pleas of innocence of intention. Just as, in military life, disobedience to an order is only excused on the ground of the direst necessity

(and not always on that ground), so in the regimented State *unconditional obedience is a routine in the control of large fields* of human conduct.*

III.

When people speak of the weakening, in modern England, of the Rule of Law, they refer, perhaps unconsciously, to the fact that the legal system has so changed in quantity and quality that many old rules of law, rules relating to the burden of evidence for example, are no longer available to protect the subject against the operation of the law itself. As the nature of English law changes from *negative* to *positive* much of the difference is lost which grounded the distinction between litigious England and an inquisitorial continent. Houses are no longer castles here. To walk is trespass, and that trespassers will be prosecuted is no longer a wooden lie. To speak the truth is alarming and dangerous ; and, if one must speak the truth, let nobody say that an Englishman is innocent until he is proved guilty, because there are accusations now against which he could not prove himself innocent however hard he tried.

Further, apart from and among the rules of law that are changing, must be reckoned the whole machinery of legislation and much of the judicial process. The task of administering a country like England on collectivist lines involves the need for greater and more detailed legislation than parliament could possibly cope with. Administration has for long been so difficult that the Executive (the Cabinet—of King's ministers, who need not be members of the Commons, or of Parliament at all !) has taken to itself an initiative in all legislative processes that involve finance, and an all but complete control over Parliamentary time ; while executively, by tradition and practice, the Cabinet acts first and gets Parliamentary approval afterwards, as if it were necessary.

That was, and is, true as to most affairs of State and all Foreign

*In England, the involuntary act or omission, as distinct from the unintentional, is still not a crime. In Germany it is otherwise.

Affairs. (Declarations of War for example are executive acts). But now, even when Parliament is seriously consulted, or has an initiative, legislation is apt to be so complex that it tends to take the form of the delegation of very wide authority to government departments ; and, so that this shall be practicable, the authority is being progressively more widely stated so that it shall not be challenged. This is the technical development and logical justification for a Ministerial Despotism which is worse than Cabinet Despotism because its executants are not Ministers !

And what is too vast for Parliament carries consequences that are too vast for the judicial system. The work of administration involves orders and inquiries and decisions of a judicial or quasi-judicial character: and by a normal division of labour these detailed inquiries, etc., fall to the departments, not to the judiciary. Moreover, to make the system work, for better or for worse, there has developed a tendency in legislation to limit the power of the individual subject to challenge the departments in ordinary litigation. Apart from the plea of bad faith (which is never improbable in a civil servant, but is almost always impossible to prove) there is no ground on which the orders or decisions of government departments can be judicially challenged, so long as they are framed within the nominal scope of the enabling statute.

Thus it comes about that, whether in the conscription of men for military service, or in the sequestration of their property, or in the enforcement of any one of innumerable rules or regulations, the department has the last word. If its enforcement is by direct action, with or without ministerial inquiry, there is normally no redress. If the enforcement is by prosecution or suit in the normal course, the departmental law is so framed that usually there is no defence.

Against the growth of this new type of government there has been abundant protest. Yet in war time, strangely enough, when the system is most highly integrated, it appears that there is a watchfulness in Parliament, and a prevalent judicial and extra judicial attitude, which, if it does not inhibit the departments directly, yet exercises an influence on their activities that

prevents the too flagrant abuse of powers, and brings us nearer to Democracy in the scent of Churchillian cigars than we were in the plebeian piping days of Baldwin's Peace.

The long drawn out ineptitude of a guinea-pig Parliament does indeed favour the argument that direct government, by reliable ministers and their fellow-servants, is productive of better results than would be the process of wringing every decision from a servile Parliament, or even wresting every decision from a nervous judiciary. And consent can always be gauged by the popularity of the utterances of the government spokesmen over the wireless.

Admittedly such a government would be irresponsible. But the devil's advocate (that devil of an advocate !) would argue that government is in any event irresponsible. Ministers are only responsible to a servile body which no longer impeaches or attaints them. They are not responsible for their fellow servants who take orders from them, since these are all servants of the Crown ; and, since the King can do no wrong, Ministers are not obliged to do right. If their generosity is questioned, they are the custodians of the public's money ; if their extravagance is alleged, they are the servants of the public, fulfilling the purpose of the common weal.

So it might be. So in fact it is. And certainly in the twixt war years, when economic pressure was taking all the substance out of liberty and equality, the nation was suffering an apathy to the fate of its institutions which boded ill for our political future. Gone were the days of benevolent prosperity, the days of a comfortable erastianism, of tolerance to criticism, charity to strangers, catholicity of friendship and a protestant resistance to outrages against sentiment. The walls of that economic fortress, like the walls of the Englishman's home, seem to have been penetrated, or eroded, all but washed away by economic floods caused by the high pressure of industry and finance. There was still one law for the rich and the same for the poor. But that had become an evil. Justice was still free to all, like a cruise on a luxury liner. And the rule of law was a *tabula in naufragio* for drowning Democrats.

In this state of mind there was no conscious spirit of resistance to the process which was transferring the control of British lives from a government existing within the laws to a government being created by laws so as to be untrammelled by law. And then a miracle happened, like the miracle of victory out of defeat. The most servile parliament since the days of the Stuarts showed itself to be capable, if not of patriotism, at least of healthy factional revolt. This was as superior to acquiescence as life is to death. And since that moment the spiritual urge that possesses even the weakest in times of crisis has been kept alive by adversity and the need for vigilance, and is still energetic, not only to animate Parliament, but to transfigure the routine of Bureaucracy with a consciousness of purpose that prevents it from becoming an agent of tyranny.

But this is the statement of the problem not the solution. The communisation which arises in war has come to stay. State activity may diminish ; but the war will leave behind it incipient social enterprises which only the State can perpetuate. Government will continue to employ the technique of departmental regulation, because no other technique is possible. So far is it from the truth that with the diminution of private rights the law will diminish, that we shall find, on the other hand, a more active, and a more intrusive, legal system than ever before. The law will be administrative and preventive, instead of contemplative and occasionally punitive. And much of its fashioning and its administration will be in the hands of relatively irresponsible officials, apathetic if not easily influenced, alternatively partisan or corrupt.

Let it not be thought that the change will be violent from a nominally free society permeated by class influences. The 1930's were nearly as bad as can be imagined. On the other hand, if the war is a valid example, there is reason to believe that bureaucrats are capable of devotion and intelligence. To insure against abuses and to create the conditions for the perpetuation of that spirit when the inspiration of war shall have abated is the major problem in post war planning.

Many technical improvements immediately suggest themselves ; the reform of parliament so as to make for free election and a free vote ; the secret ballot in Parliament ; the control of Party Whips and party patronage ; the creation of a machinery for bringing home responsibility to ministers and officials alike, criminally and not merely civilly, so that the government's cheque will not cancel governmental faults ; the working out of principles to limit governmental power, original and delegated, so that it controls but not dominates.

Those interested must bear steadily in mind that British governments will not always be engaged in a righteous war with the full moral support of all its subjects. Not all the enterprises of Communist England will be equally praiseworthy. Not all ministries, not all governments, will be good, or even honest, ones. Therefore it is important now not to create bad precedents even in a good cause.

In this connection it was said recently by a great law lord, whose true statement of the law became untrue a moment later by reason of a majority of opinion, that the arguments in that particular case might have been addressed to the King's Bench of Charles I. More serious than that criticism, it is apprehended, is the reflection that the powers defended by those arguments were created by a parliament much freer than the parliament of Charles I., in an England boasting of greater freedom than Stuart England enjoyed. Indeed a Stuart lawyer, unlearned in modern German philosophies of freedom, might view with alarm the present state of England. And were such a one to view Parliament (he would probably be elected to the modern long Parliament through a modern rotten borough), he would not require to visit the Law Lords in order to recognise the precedents. From the Lords generally, he would hear criticism strong enough to influence Cabinets ; but in the Lower House, on the front bench, he would be able to contemplate, with admiration or alarm, the embodied ghost of the Royal prerogative sitting crowned upon its parliamentary tomb.

CHAPTER V.

TOTALITARIAN PSYCHOLOGY.

I.

OWING to an unhappy coincidence between technical developments in our institutions and the spirit of the age England has, for ten years at least, been consciously a totalitarian country. That label has some importance because we live in days when names tend to determine things rather than things their names. There has been an outbreak of contagious political diseases in Europe and we have caught them. Fundamental, however, is the truth, which Plato saw so clearly, that Democracy contains in itself possible causes of its own dissolution. Or, to use again language that Plato was unable to use, Democracy can short-circuit itself; and the contact is material interest.

Material interest is at once a valid term of political reference and a dangerous guide. Material interest can be a justification for legal and economic developments which have made the State powerful, and made it an economic organization. Material interest can also be a state of mind so pervasive that those legal and political developments that are being considered become nothing but formal, rationalized, statements to describe or conceal the operation of pure greed and economic servility.

That same technique which purports to be the convenient method of government for communal purposes is also the appropriate instrument for the rule of cliques. If the State sets out to rule the whole of the nation equitably, so as to fulfil, among other things, the material purposes that we know to be important, then the State is materially determined in a sense, is communistic in a sense, but in a good sense.

If, on the contrary, the operations of the State are determined by the immediate or remote interest of some steel magnate, for example, operating on the minds of cabinet ministers through party bosses, who have bought a majority for them in the House and moral support in a venal press, then that, too, is an expression of material interest. That, too, is economic determination of politics and history. It may even masquerade as Communism, but, *in brute fact, it is Fascism. The tragedy of this period is that* what helps the development of the former helps also the latter.

II.

If Communism were destined according to the laws of its destiny attributed to Marx, then its career would stop at that stage in its evolution which is Fascism.

Fascism is the materialistic interpretation of history, self-conscious and triumphant. Fascism is the fulfilment of the life of peoples in the only way in which such fulfilment is possible at the level *of the material : the mechanized mass of material life*, drifting from the struggle and effort of Trade Unionism into the easier slavery of the Labour Front. Fascism is the product of the clash of purely material forces from which emerge gangsters who organize the world to their own glorification, and who succeed in this because they can provide in abundance the bread and circuses that are demanded by the masses from which they spring. The Bootlegger is the archetype of all Fascists. When such men succeed, by exploiting at once the cowardice and venality of human nature at decadent periods, they establish an equilibrium based on the material exploitation and contentment of their world. Their control of *modern instruments* of organization and communication, and their understanding of a mass psychology which is cognate to their own, enables them to make their despotism more far-reaching and apparently more satisfactory than any previous despotism. If there is in their system any economic hiatus, or if any moral urge manifests itself in the people, they satisfy those demands with the dexterous transvaluation of ancient

values. They call into being military glory. Being ruffians, they find that easy; and, since they owe their greatness to the sword, they eventually perish by the sword.

Communism is contrasted with Fascism as a less material ideal. If Communism is to justify itself as different from Fascism, then it must abandon the dogma and doctrine of those who saw the logic of Society but did not understand its psychology.

The Marxian cosmogony is logical and its determinism is logical (albeit with wrong premises). Only in that way could Marx (with his scepticism of all ethics) solve the conflict which is inherent in the nature of Society between individual purposes and social purposes. The pre-established harmony in Marxism swings round the belief that the desires of human beings can be proved or trained to coincide with those processes which are eventually best for the race. By stating his determinism in the simple categories of psychological hedonism Marx succeeded in giving a framework to history which accounted for many of its appearances but did not account for its living content.

Whatever truth is implicit in psychological hedonism, one thing else is also true, that it cannot account for valuations other than immediate ones; cannot account for any course of conduct that involves time and the sacrifice of the immediate to the ulterior or ultimate. And in the modern world, in which hedonism and behaviourism have been coming increasingly true, in which men think only with their throats, or down their noses, the control over time that modern machines have given to humanity has been dedicated, or prostituted, to purely hedonistic ends. In other words, what is inevitable according to Marx is Fascism not Communism; for Fascism is the last stage of Hedonism, just as bestiality is the last degree of the sensual.

III.

And we, in the last twenty years, have enjoyed Hedonism and have suffered all but the extremes of Fascism.

England has always been a materialistic country; but she has been fortunate in this, that she has enjoyed sufficient prosperity

to condition the emergence of morality and culture. Prosperity and leisure are conditions of culture and even of scientific progress, since the days when Archimedes gave his talents to the Sicilian War Office. In modern England that prosperity has been so limited, or so controlled by skill and circumstance, that for centuries the nation preserved the degree of resoluteness which accompanies a struggle that is hard but not too desperate. Relatively to a continent which was forever impoverishing itself with wasteful wars, England was able to maintain a bigger percentage of prosperous people than any other nation could show. It was only the post war world of the nineteen-twenties that revealed an England for the first time in centuries not the richest country in the world, and its vast wealth becoming ever more sharply divided among private owners, leaving a large population poor—or what is worse than poor, becoming poorer: and that when the world was increasingly conscious of ambition and ideals.

During that period the scent of Fascism was strong in England; there was more than one outbreak of violence, and more than one suggestion of the sanscullotism which takes the forms of the variegated shirt. Only the untapped reserves of English cash and character prevented the degeneration of England below the reach of the morality with which generations of Puritans had impregnated its leaders. England was reproducing quietly a process which was more violent on a continent which had spent its capital and not yet recreated new capital. Yet England also possessed the social organization which would easily lend itself to regimentation: also the materialism that made men doubt whether, when regimentation came, it would be resisted more strongly in England than in less salubrious parts of the continent.

In these days of easy communications and bad manners differences in national character and national culture tend to disappear. If materialism was the order of the continental day, it would be digested in England: for England was rich, traditionally, in the technique which disguises materialism, and makes it more dangerous. A certain hardness in the English character, a certain thrift, a certain caution, is perhaps the necessary

concomitant of the positive puritan virtues that have created modern England. But as character deteriorates, and circumstances become more uncompromisingly adverse, hardness is apt to become meanness, thrift greed, and what was once caution tends to become a narrow isolationism, narrow nationalism, narrow protectionism, and the quite unscrupulous seeking of immediate financial advantage, without reference even to the more material aspects of the future.

England has always skilfully contrived to hide her materialism. Just as cynical France and boorish Germany have always made great parade of their *politesse* and *hoflichket*, so England has always made a great parade of its sportmanship, which, if the truth be told, is not an intelligent stoicism, but simply the readiness to pay on the part of someone (merchant or gambler) who expects to be equally promptly paid. From this parade something indeed emerges, the enthusiasm of crowds at football, for example—enthusiasm for the right, perhaps. But the question is always present whether this is well grounded, or whether English sportsmanship may not, in reality, be disappearing.

Because the English are interested in money, they have perfected a polished appearance of indifference to money and an equally perfect technique for the collection of it. They are brought up not to ask for, not to talk about, money. That does not make them less insistent in their tactful way on being paid, well-paid, and promptly paid. Moreover, with arrivisme, and since commerce has become one of the fine arts, there are no longer any classes that have not developed their technique of delicate extraction. The best disguise their profits as earnings of management and directors' fees, their exorbitant bills as the firm's charges, their usury and compound interest as a recognised system of accounting. There is a fine impersonality about English debt collecting. Nevertheless, in the machinery of debt-collection England has achieved a degree of perfection which is only excelled by the garnishing system of America. English prisons receive approximately as many debtors as criminals ; and financial default is the only inexcusable crime.

In economic affairs the English seem at times incorrigibly hard. So long as that hardness coexisted with a moral sternness it did not destroy or corrupt the national character. So long as its exercise was the prerogative of a narrow but educated class, it did not corrupt. The lower classes were also self-interested, but they were forever benefiting (until the middle nineteen-twenties) from a constant rise in the standard of living and a constant migration into the circumstances which make people middle-class. But the last two decades have seen the liquidation of the British bourgeoisie. If, eventually, it is left to the lower classes to struggle hopelessly, then they, and the dispossessed middle-class which is their leader, and with which they constantly identify themselves, may manifest a materialism as embittered, as cynical, if not as wantonly destructive, as that which has reduced the continent to barbarism.

If, in these circumstances, a government arises which offers them the temporary alleviation of economic nationalism, offers them the temporary stay of public bread, the temporary stimulation of cheap amusement, and does so by means of expropriation of those that have for the benefit of those that have not, then the country becomes not Communistic, but Fascist. It may find itself not anti-individualistic but anti-semitic. Not communally minded, but common and mean minded. So, as England is the laboratory for political experimentation, let us use this picture as an ideal experiment to illustrate the logic of what has happened in other countries. Any country, having aimed at Communism, can achieve Fascism. This is true though Communism, in any good sense, depends not on the abolition of individuality and individual values, but on their preservation. Communism has for its strongest argument an appeal to social justice, and, if not to justice, to equity. But the appeal of the typical modern juggernaut State is not to justice or equity, but the easier appeal to a pragmatic mass psychology, to a hysteria in which distinctions are lost.

In some instances the spirit and history of the people redeems the system from Fascism, as perhaps in Russia. In other instances,

the people has found itself too jaded for the national effort which is required to redeem it from Fascism. So it was in France and Italy. In other instances, the history, psychology, and traditions of the nation lent themselves so easily to Fascist exploitation that they put the nation concerned beyond the reach of redemption. The danger is psychological—and real. Fascism has been an easy term of abuse to describe government negligence. But as a serious phenomenon it is to be sought (and found !) in the mentality of the people.

The moral of the story is that problems of a Society are as much spiritual as physical. A material theory cannot save a country. If Communism in the Marxian form has saved Russia, then it has only done so by transcending itself. To the cynical eye Russia in 1917 needed liberalism, needed freedom, needed humanity, and received none of these things. In a well defined sense she had no Revolution, but a dynastic succession. Internal evidence indicates that she suffered a high degree of Fascism, with all the purges that follow the administration of Fascism, and with a consequent weakening that made her appear at one time the silliest country in Europe and the weakest in proportion to her size. Yet Russia survived and survives because, in spite of its doctrinaire leadership, Russian individuality was released by the Revolution, not suppressed; because the Russian since the Revolution has had more chance of improving himself individualistically than he had ever before.

If that be true it follows that the need for England is not Communism as class-rule, not Communism as the abolition of individuality, but for Communism only if it means that reinterpretation of economic life which shall restore scope to all individuals yet not allow them to tyrannise; which shall eradicate from England the spirit of money-lending and usury that has taken possession of it so thoroughly in the last twenty years; in fine, to recreate, not the proletariat, to which nobody aspires, but the bourgeoisie which is all our hope, and which was, and continues to be, a spiritual principle in British affairs.

CHAPTER VI.

LIQUIDATION OF THE BOURGEOISIE.

AT the end of the last great war a distinguished economist wrote a book describing those changes which he called the End of Laissez-faire. The same author, and other distinguished economists, have elaborated that teaching and shown that the phenomenon of Free Trade known to nineteenth century England was only one instance of Protection, that Protection being due to England's monopolistic position achieved in many commerces and industries before the complete industrialization of the United States, Germany and Japan.

The twenty years that followed the last Great War are important because they brought out and revealed the practical implications of that important economic truth; and England has seen the effect of the loss of its producer's surplus and the political consequences of economic anxiety. The standard of living continued to rise because man is naturally mimetic and adaptive; but real wages and real incomes ceased to rise. The small earner and the small rentier found themselves taxed and rated to excess and their incomes diminishing. The country was becoming impoverished: and impoverished itself further, as the unsuccessful will, by gambling. During the last twenty years England has become a money-lending nation; divided internally into mortgagors and mortgagees; divided also into people who were rich enough to lend money abroad and those who were short of necessary capital at home.

Thus there is ground for a parallel between what happened on the continent and what happened in England. Irresponsible governments of Germany and Russia had wasted their substance in wars, just as for three centuries French dynasties had wasted the fortunes of France. In natural resources and labour power,

these countries were rich enough to recreate their capital; but a period of transition was necessary during which they were under-capitalized. And in both countries revolutionary governments of different types found a quick remedy in expropriation. But that process only differed in degree from the impoverishment of the possessing classes in England.

The disadvantage of expropriation consists in the fact that it yields a smaller return than is warranted by the trouble and distress that it involves. If the wealth of the world were aggregated and redivided the share of each would be Lord Rothschild's half-a-crown; and less, that clever stupid man might have added, when the consequent diminution in the value of money is taken into account. What is important in a healthy economy is not the distribution of wealth per capita, but the best employment of the aggregate wealth so that the wealth of the country increases not diminishes; so that the country can carry on a life of industry not of speculation, or peculation.

There is much to be said against, and little to be said for, the control of wealth by individuals in such a way that men and money and machines are directed to purposes which, in the long run, are less productive of happiness and social welfare in the aggregate than a different use of those resources would create. And there is a difference, however mysterious, between good expenditures and bad expenditures—between distribution which consists in destroying crops and that which consists in consuming them in a more usual way. But the economic order is not cured by dismembering the wealth system. To expropriate is to act mechanically, nor organically; and wealth is essentially organic. An economic world may be so confused and overgrown that clearances are necessary, not without axes and arson. But it is better, if possible, to prune the vineyards of Capitalism rather than crudely to translate them into public parks.

In countries like Czarist Russia the economic order was chaotic. When the Russians say that their Commune liquidated the Bourgeoisie, they are speaking, as Russians will, inexactly. They are attributing to the Revolution a process that was all but com-

pleted by the *Ancien Regime*. Revolutions follow, not precede, the liquidation of the Bourgeoisie. The Bourgeoisie is normally the articulate element in Society. And revolutions usually take place in a Society whose Bourgeois classes have experienced some degree of liberty, only to have it snatched from them by political or economic means. The French Revolution was led by the middle classes. The English Revolutions are famous for their bourgeois character. The Russian Revolution was led by bourgeois, and its executives were drawn from the small urban elements that possessed the rudiments of literacy, not to say education. (Hence the quite misleading appearance of Jewish predominance in Revolutionary Russia). When, subsequently, the Russian leaders organized large scale purges of so-called bourgeoisie, they were suppressing not counter-revolution but possible rival revolutions. There could be no suggestion of a bourgeois danger in Russia because, in a revolutionary country, the bourgeois owes his importance only to his representative revolutionary character. The material of his world is the people, of which he is an articulate manifestation, and which constitutes the raw material of his political forms. The bourgeois, in other words, is shot through with progress, though not always robust enough to achieve its final triumphs.

In the England, America, France and Germany of the nineteen-twenties and thirties, the bourgeoisie was being liquidated as ruthlessly as by the Czar of Russia or his successors, though through the mediation of a technically different oppression. The form of authority that differentiated the Western World from the Russian backwood was an essentially economic authority as contrasted with a military. In the ancient stages of political evolution, the political paleolithic era, represented by Czarist Russia (which at least one English philosopher refused to recognise as a political entity), authority was the manifestation of naked power revealing itself to the individual obeyer under the form of fear. In the political " neanderthal," or age of paper, authority is persuasive, manifesting itself through the desires of the obeyer and his needs that it satisfies.

There is a higher form of authority, under which people work for the sake of the work, obey because of their devotion to the purpose of the obedience. Needless to say this higher type of experience is rare at the political level. The normal of democratic politics is, to put it crudely, the satisfying of the public by the government. It is at its best when the Government is paid by the people and earns its wages honestly. It is at its worst when the Government is parasitic on the people, and staves off disaster by paying them. The essence of the relationship, whatever it is, is psychological. And there is this danger in a psychological intimacy, that it can fail through atrophy or become casual. Modern economic life has, indeed, cheapened itself. Persuasion has become coercion. What was desirable has become a need; what was a duty has become an imposition—and the motive force in conduct is the urge to acquire and evade that emanates from these things. Moreover, by the operation of a social thermodynamic, the enthusiasm of peoples gets diluted, gets redistributed into routine, and is never transmuted again into enthusiasm. The life falls out of individual effort, and people live in a sparkling circle of needs intensifying into fears.

Trading on this, the nominally democratic governments of the west have bribed and cajoled their people into complacency, with an effectiveness that the Czar of Russia might have envied. When, however, the Government failed to provide the bread, if not the circuses, dangerous developments were manifest. The people, not being idlers, being in fact bourgeois, wanted work, and, not finding it for themselves, found too much for their governments. The viciousness of the German Revolution that we have witnessed consisted, principally, in the essentially bourgeois character of the German nation. A proletariat driven to extremities is capable of violence. A middle-class driven to extremities suffers, as well, demoralization and an intellectual perversion: manifests vice, vices such as greed and hate: and the way is open to the demagogue who can give to their jaded intellects the thrill of conquest. That is what the Greek philosophers meant, when, speaking with a rich experience of

urbanism and urbanity, they said that Democracy was the nearest possible thing to Dictatorship.

With the tightening of the economic pressure on individuals there has coincided a process in the world's thought to materialism; not to the integrated deistic optimistic mechanism of the nineteenth century, but to a shallow pragmatic phenomenalism, pessimistic and sceptical as to the grounds of the world order. This characterizes sophisticated society. Thus later revolutions have been different from the Russian because of their moral indifference. Harnessing the technical resources of modern communications, they have been easier and more thorough-going than any revolution before. With the technique of Socialism they have been able to make their revolution penetrate further into society. But, lacking in all ethical content, they have been nothing more than revolutions. Thus there is nothing to distinguish Hitler or Mussolini from the Palace Revolutionaries of decadent Rome, or from the usurpers of the lesser Greek States—of whom the type is Philip of Macedon. From that period of decadence, there echoes the saying of the adventurer Pyrrhus: The City may be conquered by any one who leads to the gates an ass laden with gold.

The moral of these historical analogies should be obvious to the denizens of countries like England and America, which, for a variety of political, economic, and intellectual, causes, have stood on the brink of Fascist revolution and only been preserved therefrom by that purgation in suffering which is war. England has seen the backbone of her economic life sapped and rotting for twenty years. The English Bourgeoisie has been disappearing—for a great many reasons. One reason may be that it has won its battle, established its principles, and outlived its utility. The upper strata of society have adopted its methods, the lower strata of society have adopted its demands. The English middle-class was left in the position of an insured person who finds himself competed with by the better secured, and with no material advantage over the uninsured recipient of public assistance. He finds also that the endowment with which he has endowed himself

has depreciated in value because so many have emulated his example.

Further, a period of rising prices, rising wages, rising taxation, made the rich richer and the poor less poor ; but it rendered the comfortable uncomfortable. No one need weep for the impoverished rich—but there is a new poor unrepresented in the Lords. Their savings and their property have been called upon to be exploited, becoming the subject matter of mortgage, the collateral of bank overdraft. What had been permanent wealth, yielding income, became the means of securing day to day existence, and in that way was consumed. In order to maintain standards of comfort (which were rising) on real income (which was falling) they fell victims to the plausible temptations of an expanding credit system. It was an American age ; an age of Building Societies and Hire Purchase Corporations, purveying jerry-built houses, one room flats and veneered furniture. Priestley has depicted the surface of this world to perfection, in Vignettes without depth or shadow.

With the passing of the middle-class went Liberalism; Liberalism in the wide sense—the doctrine that life is more than the State and that politics is more than political economy. Also, with the passing of the middle class, there went the atmosphere of independence which had characterized the English academic world, and the modest background of economic independence which for so long had made English intelligence possible. Consequently, even if English intelligence fought shy of thoroughgoing materialism, there was a suspicion that it would not offer great resistance when the worst manifestations of materialism began to make themselves felt. The English Bourgeoisie was being liquidated. In 1939 it remained to be seen whether British intellect was still capable of a beneficient revolution. That was never proved.

III.

Hitler, the articulate and self-conscious incarnation of social paranoia, has described the Democratic disease as Plutocracy.

That is a shrewd but shallow diagnosis, a diagnosis made by a materialist. *The disease is not plutocracy.* The disease consists in the psychological weakness which enables people in a relatively free world to be determined exclusively by purely hedonic interests, and which makes plutocracy possible. On the same principle, the disease of the ancient world was not slavery, but the capacity of people to be determined exclusively by fear and self-indulgence. That lower level is being recapitulated to-day in nations which have passed from materialism to that infra materialism which is cruelty, cowardice and hysteria. From the disease of materialism and its consequences Fascist Italy and Germany have suffered worse than we, because their history is more perverted and because they were always more self-seeking and depraved. That, perhaps is what makes their gangster, nest-feathering, leaders so expert in the plausible attribution of vices to the rest of the world.

In recent years Communist Russia itself may be said to have manifested symptoms of the same malady ; not, ironically enough, in its materialistic philosophy (which amounts to nothing more than a naive statement of egalitarianism and social purpose), but in the technique of corruption, which is so easy in bureaucracy, and which is not lessened by the return of a limited capitalism, and the regrowth of nationalism and diplomatic chauvinism.

These have resulted in the creation of a Russian type which would be equally at home in the most competitive areas of America. Generally, indeed, throughout the world, there are influences at work which tend to produce a slick, selfish and shallow average personality ; well informed and polished on occasion, but pragmatic, and with a mechanical culture only. The tendency which is called Technocracy creates an attitude of mind which values a narrow efficiency against a background of irresponsibility. The machine man, who should have the mental independence of one who controls nature, is unfortunately lost in the complexities of modern machinery, and tends to be an obeyer *par excellence.* In this way the progress of machinery has made Bureaucracy possible ; and Bureaucracy is a kind of machinery whose machine man makes tyranny possible.

Thus we have, nowadays, in the world an average type which is neither capitalistic nor Communistic; only sensual, unambitious and regimentable. Because some of the worst manifestations of this mechanical parochialism emanated from the less civilized areas of the United States, it has been described as Americanism. Actually it is the creation of the wrong kind of proletariat from a weakening bourgeoisie, and is far from peculiar to America. On the other hand, when we study the examples of European countries we discover the more sinister feature of an intelligentsia which offers less resistance to materialization than does the proletariat. European intellectuals have been among the most vicious exponents of materialism. We now have reason to know that among the crude, hard, but still really young, Americans intelligence still preserves some ideals.

America is still a rich enough country not to spend time dreaming poor men's dreams. America is enjoying capitalism as England enjoyed it years ago. But although America's problems are only beginning, it is worth while to consider Americanism, i.e., American materialism, and the American cynicism that has influenced Europe. Looking at America one is tempted to speculate that America is young enough, and rich enough in potential, to get rid of vices and social ailments which older, poorer, Europe will have to struggle hard to conquer.

America is materialistic enough; what is worse, precociously materialistic. But when one looks at the thing historically, one must realize that America is an expanding country, and a naive country; whereas England and Europe are old enough to have suffered previous disruptions and previous weaknesses, previous chaos and previous decadence, to a greater degree than the short life of America permits. America has had its Civil War with its aftermath of carpet bagging and political chicanery; and many generations of an oppressive capitalism. But, allowing for the speed of modern development, she is still immature. Certainly she is young enough not to have had a Restoration or a Queen Anne, a Catherine or a Peter. Better, she has created her wealth in more durable ways than did these despots; and the country has

gone on, and can continue, expanding. Therefore, English Americanism and European Americanism are worse than American Americanism. Over there, the world is still fresh and crude. For all its over-developed vices, it has compensating undeveloped virtues. Here the suggestion is that we are using American technique and machinery and go-getting, not as a stimulant to civilization, but as a substitute for it. Evidence of that is afforded by the vicious effect that European immigrants in recent years have had on America itself. Theirs is vice for its own sake. But American intelligence has conquered, or is conquering, its vices and materialism. American spirituality may amuse English ironists, but there is strength behind it. On the other hand, it was, for a time at least, a matter of speculation whether, if chaos came to England, England would be resilient enough to resist.

That chaos did not come again to England is partly fortuitous, and partly due to the fact that institutions which embody good traditions tend to survive the disappearance of the traditions themselves. There have been times in the last two decades, periods of unrest, from the General Strike onwards, periods when, in London at least, hooliganism challenged authority—unsatisfactory authority at that. One very serious development, the growth of working class Fascism, was defeated by the vigorous resistance of the East End of London. There was a morning when respectable men hid crowbars in their copies of the more pacific newspapers, and betook themselves to the alleys of Whitechapel to make certain that "they should not pass." During that time English Law and the English judicature—especially the lesser, and less pleasant, magistracy—became oppressive; but they did not succeed in completely overthrowing the traditions of freedom which Trade Unionists and Chartists and Orangemen and Catholic Emancipators and Victorian Atheists had purchased with their liberties or lives.

The present war, with its partial suspension of the ordinary legal system, seems to have completely suspended the reactionary movement as well. But we saw enough to realize that those who should have been the custodians of liberty—the magistrates, the

heads of police, the parliamentarians—defended it less vigorously in times of peace than their libertarian traditions warranted. It is hard to explain this phenomenon entirely on economic grounds. But economic forces were emerging. The country seemed to be dividing itself into classes. Class warfare, which had been a theory to describe the logic of society, was becoming a brute fact. Over in materialistic America workers were securing the passage of Labour Laws with much less resistance from the vested interests than was being presented to the relatively small demands of the English proletariat. The country of tradition could, at least in the nineteen-thirties, take salutary lessons from the country with fewer traditions.

To continue the paradox, this country, which is the home of political education, was rapidly falling behind less politically educated societies. The economic interpretation of society was at least as true in London as in Soviet Russia. Truer, possibly, because in Soviet Russia there was demonstrated at least the guiding power of self-conscious intelligence. In London it was being abundantly demonstrated that intelligence and intellectual construction amounted to nothing more than an emergent phenomenon from the levels of the material; a phenomenon which was only ornamental. London at least had forgotten how much of its material strength owed its being to ideas and to values. Baldwin's London and MacDonald's London, cynical as Stalin's Russia (but without Russian strength of will to compensate), refused to believe in the creative power of the moral values and intellectual ideas to which they paid lip service. Their morality and their intelligence corresponded to the charity of the very rich; just as the idealism of the Russians reduced itself to the hunger cries of the very poor.

Small wonder, then, that the world was divided into camps; of those who could not work for raving by day against Capitalism, and those who could not sleep at night for fear of Communism. What they did not realise was their fundamental comradeship; that they still served the same master; and that, in the fullness of time, there would arise one—a demon form, however, not an

angel—who would stand against both of them and with drawn sword threaten to strike them down, and who was destined to march against them at the head of more material hosts.

At this "material time," the barbarian was not yet at the gate. New Vandals, new Visigoths, new Huns, were appearing in the distance, but at that time they were still regarded as possible recruits against Imperial Civil War. The Nazi Storm Troops seemed, in the early days, to constitute a possible Praetorian Guard (Hitler still regards himself as the appointed Guardian) of the British Empire. Their specific role would be the protection of England, not against the attacks of the Norwegian Army, or the Swiss Navy, or other imminent dangers, but against the enemy within the gate; the Worker, the Striker, the Revolutionary, the Communist. These things did not come to pass, for the barbarian attacked the whole of our civilization when his patience was exhausted. It remains to be seen whether his depredations will eliminate for ever English civil discontent, or cause it some day to revive in a more serious form.

It may well come about that the Communization of Society, to meet the demands of total war, will restore self-respect to the classes that have been forced for so long to live without it. Meanwhile, it is important to cast a glance at the new class, generally thought to be the successor of the bourgeoisie.

In serious fact, the proletariat is not an opposition to the middle-class. The best element in the proletariat live for one purpose only—to become middle-class. The history of modern Communism is not the progressive realization of the truth of the labour theory of value in its crude form, but the progressive realization that labour is the matrix of value in an expanding world, not only in its capacity as producer, but regarded also as consumer. The proletariat becomes bourgeois as its purchasing power increases; and, at the same time, becomes political; and as it comes political, its demands are bourgeois demands.

The Socialist opposition throughout the world has always based its claim to a hearing on principles of justice which are bourgeois principles. Their progressive taxations are based on an equity

which the bourgeoisie has developed, though it does not include the tactful handling of those who have had and who have no longer. But generally the ideals of the have-nots are "have" ideals. This may be machiavellianism. It may also be the genuine manifestation of the value judgments of the class which is asserting its place in the common tradition.

The rise of the proletariat, then, is either the regeneration of the bourgeoisie, or else a lapse into different values, possibly into the chaotic systems which are military regimentation. Doubtless the future welfare of the proletariat depends on the permanence of the ideals to which its predecessors aspired. If those ideals are real, then the conflict is not a class conflict, but a problem in the reorganization and better articulation of the system of wealth which includes all classes—a claim of admitted right.

Class conflict means something only on the assumption that the fundamentals of the present society are radically different from the fundamentals of the old. If it is true to say with Marx that quantitative changes lead to qualitative changes, if it is true that the mere increase in the numbers of the more menial of workers creates a new standard of valuation which is important because it is expressed on a large scale, and if their standard is purely material, then the bourgeoisie is really doomed. But quantity is the matrix of Fascism not of Communism; Communism implies quality, if not the quality of intellectual clarity.

Perhaps the most serious criticism that can be brought against Communism is the accidental one that its doctrinaire credo and catechisms rationalize the materialism and vice of the kind of hopeless youth which is the modern Fascist. One might have seen such a one at any time in the last twenty years, either on slum soap-boxes, or idling among the Behemoth who graze without nourishment on the sands of the coast of Bohemia. Among the reflective relics of widowed Bloomsbury, and among the sleek haired, neat dancing sensualists, common to Poplar and Chelsea, one might search with a candle and fail to find a genuine fanatic. Thieves in plenty might have been—are still to be—found; but these are the sinners of orthodoxy rather than the martyrs of heresy. Their

world and that atmosphere were, in fact, as materialistic and hedonistic as the world and atmosphere of the Mansion House, where the Fathers of the City were wont to display their disregard for the orphans.

The London Communist, like the London Capitalist, was only interested in the acquisition of means—by means which a half understood jesuitry enabled him to justify by reference to half apprehended ends. If one ran him to earth among the gin-drinkers, or in the Italian restaurants, one would never succeed in distinguishing him from the thirst-slaking, dole-seeking, unemployed. He bore on his face all the stigmata of the sinister bars. Type of a motherland in which the best people had no fathers. To speak to a spokesman of this generation was to learn that " his talk was all on sin and harlotries," on drabs and drink. Under whatever banner he set out, he was certain to be a looter rather than a crusader. Ancestry and traditions he had as little as his " enemies " in the city. The bestiary of his heraldry was contained in an automobile catalogue with which he touted, and which obsessed him as much as the devices on the limousines driven by the liveried chauffeurs of his antagonistic clients.

And what distinguished this liverish sansculotte from the dyspeptic livery-man ? Nothing at all. In different ways they were livers of the same low lives.

CHAPTER VII.

MOTIVES AND INFLUENCES.

LET it be understood that the England of the last two decades was not a wicked world, or even, at first sight, a suffering world. To over sensitive, over subtilized, intellectuals it may have seemed the very dregs of experience, the dust and ashes of culture; and to these the later imminence of cruelty, bestiality, and misery was a logical development only to be expected. But to those who had not yet seen their mounted sign the world appeared benevolent enough, guiltless of the cruder reproaches, a world with charity for the orphan and insurance for the widow, with benevolence a habit and indifference a sufficient substitute for toleration; a Christian world for all its lack of theology (outside politics) and for all its dearth of prayer. And constantly in this world luxury was flowering out of a squalid industrialism as theatreland blossoms from the market; and all its roads were paved with good inventions.

But the defects of the world were patent to anyone who examined the machinery that made it go and the social organization that held it together. That the defects were well known is the worst indictment of its smugness. The results were seen in the West End slums, the causes in the prosperous city. Typical of British social organization during that period was the Mansion House. Before he could be elected to office the aspiring Lord Mayor had to satisfy the Common Council that he was able to spend, or waste, tens of thousands of pounds without incurring the displeasure of the Registrar and without invoking the aid of the Official Receiver. Other virtues were taken for granted as the invariable concomitants of such affluence. In other words Affluence connoted Influence.

In that word Influence lies the germ of modern social corruption. The Communist is criticized because he maintains that the legal system, the interpretation and the administration of the law, is or should be (according to context) a resultant of the dominant economic purpose of society. He is attacked because that jurisprudence makes the law unpredictable and unreliable; and, indeed, nobody is more devoted to the formality and the rigidity of legal doctrine than the Communist who invokes it when he is arbitrarily imprisoned or oppressed. But if it was ever true that there were social forces determining rights and justices from the outside, or mysteriously from the inside, it was true in twentieth century England, where legislation and administration, not to say jurisdiction, flowed from the banqueting table like the wine that overflowed the bottles. At the Mansion House we saw the economic interpretation of history, including law and politics and ethics, come true. In Influence, there, was to be seen an operative causation more powerful than the dialectic or the class war. To say that it was sinister is not to imply the existence of secret conclaves of unscrupulous financiers of Semitic appearance. But if a pride of bloated Aryans dined together one night, and next day one of them voted for a measure that rendered another more prosperous, only a very conservative social scientist would refuse to diagnose the transition of some filter-passing virus.

The essence of Influence, and the essence of many mysterious causes, is that these things cannot be observed by direct observation, cannot be inferred by arithmetical calculation, but must be apprehended inductively. Then, although the relationship may appear to be a valid explanation of events in the aggregate, particular cases remain impossible of proof. Given honesty we would have available proof by confession, as when Baldwin confessed to partisan chicanery over British armaments. Given hypocrisy, and the resources of plausible explanation, nobody will ever succeed in demonstrating to an unsophisticated public the manifestations of that immanent logic which determine a decadent society.

Baldwin has explained many political phenomena as manifestations of an English lack of logic. But one may well be justified in commenting that we have had too much logic, not too little—that those may have been rational, not empirical, purposes which drove Lloyd George and Churchill to wander long in the wilderness, while Baldwin remained, with bear and ragged staff, to make and unmake Kings.

II.

That a nation which did not scruple to change a Sovereign dedicated itself to the protection of the Mark may commonly be regarded as one of the mysteries of history. But that it is typical of an atmosphere charged with similar mystery must be beyond dispute. The American dedication to the arming of Japan, until 1941, is a parallel mystery. Among these mysteries must be included the noticeable contraction of English scope, and English society, into a receding, concentric system of vicious circles. British spiritual protectionism was calculated to foster the arrival of those who had arrived and the exclusion of those who had not arrived. A Parliament of guinea pigs, a venal press (with politics an adjunct to advertisement), a guild system in the professions, a tariff system in industry and commerce, and (typically) a refusal to allow immigration across the borders of nations or the borders of classes, expressed the ethical attitude of the diminishing group of the prosperous and their resolute determination to maintain, in their life-times, the richness of their preserves and the productivity of their foreign investments. The vicious solidarity of the closed corporations of British public life was the psychological sympathy that we have called Influence.

Influence was the magic word which opened the circle to the influential entrant, and which closed it to all the uninfluential except a casual few who contrived to be at once important and dangerous on their own merits. In this way the Bank of England absorbed Keynes just as Hindenburg's Germany absorbed Hitler.

In terms of the Joint Stock State Influence operates in the

following way. Whereas the shareholder is entitled to vote for his own immediate interests (although he is unwise to do so) while the Director must vote for the best interest of the Company, a skilful co-ordination of voting power organized at an unofficial board meeting, at say, the Mansion House, may result in the equation of the interests of the Company with the interests of the Directors and Proxy Holders, and may cause the formal decisions, when made, to express any interest but that of the smaller shareholders. Any incidental reduction in the wages of the Company's employees is regarded as unimportant consequential routine. And this meets with less opposition than might be expected, even from the inarticulate, because they themselves understand only too well the inherent "rightness" of the social proprieties, and do recognize and respect the manifestations of a profit making motive which is cognate to their own.

If there be in the world any Influence which is not determined by a profit making motive, then it may or may not be a good one. Influences which express a profit making motive may also, accidentally, be good ones, especially during a period of economic expansion. But in a contracting economic circle Influence animated by profit making purposes will only be good from the standpoint of the few, not of the many. In a world, then, which is committed, for better or for worse, to a belief that the interests of the many are more important than the interests of the few (it being recognized that the purposes of the many are at least as human as the purposes of the few) any determination of society in order to satisfy the demand for money of some powerful individual is as wrong as if a gangster were to exact his demands by violence. Nor is it without significance that in recent times the gangsters of the world have taken the form of, or been financed by, individuals and corporations whose interest has been disguised as the interests of society, or of the State.

The reply of the modern capitalist to this indictment takes the form of a plausible *tu quoque*. The critic of a movement like Communism, which endeavours to eliminate the profit making vices by transferring the function of profit making to the State,

can point to the growth, under collectivism, of an immense body of so called public servants, who exist remote from life, remote from the real purposes of the machinery of which they are part, indifferent to the welfare of man or beast, and completely irresponsible. They may also instance the contemporary attitude of some Shop Stewards and " machine lawyers " whose function appears to be haggling, indifferently reasonable or unreasonable, even over the most vital tasks in the war effort. These they say are petty tyrants who make the major tyrannies possible. These they say are heartless and grasping as any commissioned tout of any usurer, are mean and unyielding, withal corruptible. Indeed, it is eminently arguable that in their corruptibility lies the only redeeming feature of this mechanical system. And the apologist of capitalism points smugly to the cold and hopeless averages of a world in which all are bureaucrats, civilly or uncivilly serving so that more or less civil service may persist; and they pertinently ask what has become of that spirit of society which capitalism is supposed to kill, and which this new iron system is calculated to preserve.

The answer is that the service of the State, or of the Community, need not take place in a world which is struggling on the margin of subsistence. The present day civil servant is as much an automaton, a robot, a wage slave, as any of the exploitees of private capital, and possibly lives a more hopeless and rigid life. In a better planned world the worker would not be hag-ridden by economic limitations and the spectre of poverty, would not be tied to the mill of his needs and the bad habits that they generate. And if it be replied that in this lies concealed a profit making demand, that criticism can be accepted. Everybody in society wishes, legitimately, to make a profit. What they also wish, though the wish is for ever being thwarted, and thrust back into the unconscious, is to live a life in which the profit making motive shall be as subordinate a consideration as the possibility of ill health is to the perfectly healthy.

The demand for profit, the demand for the control over time which work and money alike provide, is normal, but becomes self-

contradictory when the whole of thought and life is sacrificed to the routine. In the psychology of normal ambition there is something which is a matter of degree, and which is too easily thought away by academicians, or apologists who use words that prevent them from thinking. The whole of civilization depends on differences of degree, between, for example, the desperation of the savage and the less desperate ambition of the more sophisticated product of a more human society. There is a difference of degree between graspingness and prudence, just as there is a difference of degree between generosity and foolish irresponsibility as to one's own welfare. There is a difference in the very modes of the worship of wealth, between the materialists who regarded prosperity as the reward for effort, and the Mammon worshippers to whom money is an end in itself. Consequently there is a valid and infinitely important difference between the attitude to himself and society on the part of the worker in a free world, and the attitude of the usurer or gambler enslaving, and himself enslaved, in the pursuit of what should be a liberator but is a tyrant.

The criticism of the profit motive must be read as the criticism of a rational motive become an end in itself, a purpose become a habit. In the mechanical pursuit of agglomerate money wealth man loses independence and balance, because he loses objectivity. When money talks it talks nonsense. It says, on the one hand, "nothing for nothing"; and, on the other hand, it demands that itself shall increase by reason of its mere existence. In this way money is exclusive, yet it has its undesirable freemasonry. Influence is the magnetic direction of events in money's field of force. Behind all Influence is the unstated expectation that favour will bespeak favour, that to those that have shall accordingly be given. Hence, among the money grubbers, a pragmatic acceptance, in municipal society and in international politics, of a belief in the rightness of the powerful and the successful; hence the cheerful acceptance of any accomplished fact however wickedly achieved. Hence, further, and this is the worst, an utter indifference to the ethical merits of any question at all which has an economic aspect, and an utter indifference to any issue which has not.

This is the mentality of a society in which the control of money emerged, in modern times, as a special function in the hands of possessors. In the integrating world of the twentieth century this, too, integrated; grew like a cancer. This mentality became so dominant that politics and non-political life alike became epiphenomenal to the pursuit of gain. The tragedy of the age is that this psychology permeated victims as well as victors; and we have seen that that movement in society which alone protested against the money mentality has been itself at all times in danger of succumbing to a mechanism in which all mentality is lost, and which becomes charged itself with the current of the system which it once aimed to transform.

When, in describing the misconduct of the leaders of this generation, people speak of Fascism, they are vague. Fascism is only the result of an irresponsibility and a lack of humanity which the machinery of this age has allowed to become centralized and dominant. The very expansion of society, and its improvement, has made this possible, because it has enabled human beings to accept an average of indolence in which they lose their capacity to resist. They cannot then complain of other individuals for the fact that they have invested under compulsion of circumstances their lives, their inheritances, and their efforts, in a badly managed Company in which the Directors hold crippling Debentures. That is the price they pay for benefits received, for a period of peace and security and improved conditions of living, and the gratifying assurance that they would not actually die starving in the gutter if their employers could help it.

On the other hand their employers were not so remote from them that they were completely uninfluenced by the opinions and the valuations of the workers. Some of the workers achieved a living wage, though admittedly they died in the attempt. The working classes in general did achieve the extraction from their employers of the admission that the workers were masters. Needless to say the new masters failed hopelessly to educate, or control, their frock-coated servants.

III.

The worst consequence of a system geared to mechanized money is the irresponsibility that supervenes in all classes. Routine work made tolerable only by standardized payment, its limits accepted (wrongly) as inevitable, generates a psychology of acquiescence in the masses and self-indulgence in the classes. Against this indolence even the intellect of England has not been proof, for the besetting sin of all intellects is laziness. Let the academic economist only put on evening dress, let the labour leader once be properly barbered, and Samson in the hands of Delilah is not a weaker vessel. The scent of cigar smoke will complete the spell. In due course he will find himself, together with Judges, leading parliamentarians, soldiers of science and rebels of art, the ornaments of the bar and the vestments of the church, and all those within reach of five thousand pounds of annual income, drinking cheek by jowl with brokers and shippers and manufacturers and chain store keepers and the financiers who assess their wealth by counting the Companies of which they hold the chairs. The latter group are the masters, the former the servants. The latter pay the piper and call the tune, though they do not pretend to write the score, or to question the rendering of anything other than accounts. They pass uncriticised any tune not registered by brass.

And, if one enquires deeply into it, one may find that the luminaries who shine, the musicians who sound, at the City Banquets are not unconscious of their proper function. They speak as if to instruct, but their work is to amuse. They have ceased to be the creators of life and have become its creations. Although not entirely incapable of determining the values of an intelligent society, they can only do so by seduction or flattery. For the rest, they are of very little more importance than superfluous salt on the earth, beaded bubbles at the brim, the braid on the uniforms of pageantry, the gilt on the enormous crust which is furnished by the livery of gingerbread makers.

So at least it was ; one hopes that it will not ever be so. There

are times, and perhaps the time of writing is one of them, when the self-interest of the world awakes to its unenlightenment, when even big business discovers that at least the regulative categories of life come from above ; derive, that is, from thought or intuition which is more than the blind empirical experience of the market. Then the least intelligent of people listen and understand—and endeavour to attune themselves to purposes and beliefs greater than those which have directed their lives. But at all other times those who have leisure to think tend to think only what is pleasing to them, and will only listen to what they want to hear. And they will entertain such people as share their selfish outlook or are prepared to pander to their selfish tastes—and even these they do not thank. In this way the fashionable prelates, fashionable lawyers, fashionable doctors and scientists, are translated into actors and professional jesters. There is no ignominy in that calling in a period so artificial that the stage is its pattern of living. But when the politician-turned-comedian, or the cleric-turned-journalist, are brought face to face with the tragedies of real life and the nightmare melodramas of contemporary politics, they show themselves to be the puppets of a peculiarly unconvincing illusion.

IV.

Law and religion and art, according to the Marxist, are opiates, illusions, epiphenomena of the class struggle. If there is any place in England where the teachings of these Communists come true, that place is not Limehouse or Stepney but the Mansion House at a Mayoral Banquet. In Limehouse and Stepney people struggle from day to day, because, to the inhabitants, life is more than struggle for subsistence. Although they barely maintain a hold on life they believe in it. The little patch of sky that they see between the chimney stacks satisfies their inarticulate belief in some kind of heaven. At the Mayoral Banquet an enormous number of pot bellied potentates endlessly endure boring interludes filled only by the uneasy consciousness

that their bellies are "giving them Hell." It is in the Mansion House rather than in Limehouse that life is determined by habit. It is in the Mansion House that habits approximate to the conditioned reflexes which the pupils of Pavlov have doubtless worked out in their physiologies of capitalism. The talk is drivel with conventional responses, the language that money talks; the behaviour is gregarious feeding and swilling. The atmosphere of thought and deliberation which is created by the professional speakers is, your Marxist would say—and in this instance I should not contradict him—analogous to the noises of grunting and eructation that emanate from animals feeding, the pleasurable sounds and sights of contented salivation.

These private circuses, however, are not to be condemned because they amount to indulgence. The criticism of them is that these feastings and bibulations are, in substance, the board meetings of the directors of the national life. The persons who frequent them do not only eructate and salivate expensively; they also matter. They can stimulate the body of society or poison it. Their influence flows from them and through the social bloodstream to enrich or to impoverish. Latterly its coursings have suggested nothing so much as the bane which Claudius poured into the ear of Hamlet. The consequent festering of the body politic is even now only too evident.

In socialist terms, this seeping of influence, this permeation by mean motive, is the social biological process by which authorities and institutions and modes of life that have outlived their utility persist and flourish. As the quantity of society has increased, so acquiescence becomes easier, and resistance harder, to the social "qualities." Moreover, the poison that seeps through modern society is much more seductive of acquiescence than the fiery influences of more primitive tyranny. (It also conditions the appeal of present day tyranny to a generation avid of new sensation). Influences have seduced what was once virile opposition. To-day the Trade Union is hard to distinguish from the City Guild.

The Fathers of the City are not unconscious of these truths.

The man who lends money at compound interest, and the smaller man who depends upon his investments in the banks and finance corporations, usually has a shrewder apprehension of realities than is enjoyed by the politician, lawyer, or cleric, who advises him and dines with him, or the idealist who attacks him. The intellectuals on his side are remoter from life than he is, but they help him with the conservative ideology which masks his more cynical manoeuvres, just as Nazi ideology disguised as well as inspired the efforts of German magnates and military adventurers. The devil may or may not be a good exponent of scripture, but he has the money to pay clergymen to quote it for him.

Therefore, nowadays, there is a sanctimonious unanimity among the beneficiaries of private capital. They are fully aware and ready to admit that the world is corrupt with the corruption of the profit motive. People have softened, they say; have acquired a taste for luxury; will not do a day's work. The ten thousand plutocrats who work so hard to spend half the income of Great Britain for their private purposes are acutely conscious that the other forty-odd million inhabitants have been weakened and debilitated by a mercenary attitude. Therefore, they advocate all manner of moral and psychological reform; are even prepared to bestow benediction on any government programme calculated to inspire the people with a new faith. They call it the Ideal of Service. They are not, however, equally convinced that the creation for the masses of an economic order which would relieve them from economic pressure is within the bounds of practical politics. Besides, they think that it will make people lazy. But they are always ready to compromise with a stirring opposition. A Beveridge can make an Indian Summer.

The analogy to this in foreign politics is the strategy of apparent surrender to the merits of Soviet Russia, with unstated reservations in favour of our German customers when enthusiasm makes the mistake of going too far. In short the capitalist is getting ready to conquer his conquerors. And who will stop them short of ruin?

The England of private enterprise is, I have said, not a wicked world. But a more socialistic, more bureaucratic, more regimented England, perhaps a more blase England, may prove easier to corrupt. We have seen the external similarities between Fascism and Communism. The spiritual differences which will keep a Communistic world Democratic are going to be hard to preserve, precisely because they are spiritual. The threads of Democracy are more slender now, but more vital than ever they were before. We shall be dependent on our better motives as completely as the traveller is dependent on the skill of the engineer who built the railway bridge. Meanwhile economic reorganization cannot alter the human mind so as to create better motives. It can, however, help in the creation of conditions in which better Motives and Influences have scope than those which are responsible for our present discontents.

CHAPTER VIII.

NORTH SEA BUBBLE.

I.

THE problem of recent generations has been described as a problem of Distribution. But when the organic nature of wealth is considered, when one bears in mind the creativity of labour with the aid of money, and the inspiration to economic creation which comes from the circulation of money, then it must be realized that the problem is one of Production as well as of Distribution. Indeed the usual distinction is altogether too facile. If it means anything it means that Distribution distributes wealth but cannot undo national poverty, whereas Production produces wealth for those that have no need of it. A more proper account is given when easy antitheses are abandoned and the problem is stated in terms of wealth systems. Then, either a wealth system is dynamic and living and expanding at a reasonable pace, or else it is static ; and that means declining.

In the nineteen-twenties the wealth of the world which had been inflated was being deflated. To understand what was happening, one has to go back to some elementary facts of economics which are really quite simple, although there now exists a profession devoted to making them appear difficult. One may consider the relatively harmless tobacco industry. Before Sir Walter Raleigh introduced this innocuous narcotic to England, in order to assist him in the blandishment of a tyrannical and intemperate female monarch, there was no tobacco industry and no tobacco commerce. Now, to speak of the home market only (and in rough terms), at least 5,000,000 people smoke about twenty cigarettes a day, simply because they have formed that habit, acquired that taste. To cater for that demand, many

millions of pounds of capital are exploited and many thousands of workers are employed. These are more or less paid, and spend their earnings on a variety of things, including tobacco; and thousands of businesses, from retail shops to advertising agencies (of which the largest are disguised as newspapers), and now the very war effort itself, are kept in being and circulation, animated and inspired by the perpetual puffing of tobacco; a system of wealth which continues to exist and flourish, yet perpetually goes up in smoke.

Imagine for one moment the effect of the sudden disappearance of the taste for tobacco. Capital would be wasted, labour thrown on to the market, commerce and transport abated, taxes lost. The Red Army would go short of its marginal tank. Red Indians would scalp each other by the shores of the Great Lakes. Indeed, we know what would happen from analogy, for we have seen how the prohibition of the consumption of alcohol in America involved the abolition, and recreation in worse form, of a system of production ranging from machine shops to disorderly houses, from armoured vehicles to disarming vice dens. And, perhaps more harmfully, we have seen the effect of disarmament on English economic life, how it paralysed the British steel industry and dependent coal industry, until the leaders of finance undertook the reconstruction and rearmament of Germany, on the principle that the Devil provides work for idle "hands." And, in time, that unhappy country again developed an economy which can be compendiously described as Militarism, a system of life and production unfortunately less evanescent than those which are the manifestation of less nocuous tastes. For consistency was given to it by the obstinate, inveterate, German tradition of sadistic exploitation, just as the consistency of the economy of a country like Switzerland is to be found in the civilized tendency of the bourgeoisie to sublimate its baser instincts in sport.

There are, one may suppose, needs of life, needs for food and shelter and the protection of the young, which constitute relatively permanent factors in any economy; and the satisfaction of those needs is the ultimate test of any system. But

thanks to the incalculable complication of contemporary human life beyond those elementary needs, and thanks to the immeasurable elasticity of human desire between the limits of the unattainable and the intolerable, modern economies cannot be stated in terms of humanity or nature at all. Rather, modern life either finds itself expanding, so as to make more people more blindly productive, or else contracting so as to make for fewer people—and those less productive. The economic system expands when there is human energy to support expansion physically and psychologically. There is contraction when human resources or human confidence is inadequate to sustain the process of expansion. In the latter case, it may be said that the wealth of the world is inflated and being deflated. The wealth of the world is inflated because it consists in a total of value assessed by a valuation which is no longer commonly made. The inflation of a currency is only an instance, or a symptom, of an inflated wealth system.

Currency, in fact, is a commodity among other commodities, and capable like tobacco, or alcohol, or armaments, of being over produced or under produced. In modern times it has been over produced and badly distributed; not over produced as paper relatively to gold, for gold, in the last analysis, enjoys a largely psychological value derived from its significance as currency; but over produced as currency, owing to the development of joint stock banking, State capitalism, and the commercial exploitation of the bill of exchange. Currency, which started as a measure of wealth in order to facilitate exchange and the division of labour, is now a symbolic entity, good in function, in so far as it expresses the capital element and the convenient ratios of, a dynamic wealth system, but bad when it becomes valued for itself, and when that valuation thwarts its proper function.

In one respect, then, Socialist theory is clearly right; that it is necessary for the money of the world to be produced, controlled, and distributed so as to turn to the best, and most harmonious, uses, according to accepted ethical values, the creativity of the world's labour.

As to its reality, the Teutonic barter system has shown the real function of money, the need for it, and the limits of its power, just as our own finance shows the vastness of its scope.

Withal money depends on goods for significance.

All the resources of modern chemistry are inadequate to solve the contemporary problem of turning gold into base metal. But there is a psychologic alchemy which, properly used, can conjure labour with signs written on pieces of paper. That labour can be used to produce bread from the soil, and metal from beneath the soil. It can make munitions. It can also be used to produce cakes and ornaments for the few, and squalid living conditions for the many. It can be employed in paper making; whether the paper is the paper of the civil service which accumulates into bundles so as to create work for men who bind it in red tape (so called because it is white) or newspaper, useful, among better purposes, for inculcating extravagances into persons unwise enough to believe advertisement columns (and incidentally they do, because they also believe the political opinions dictated by the same advertisers); and it can also be used for making currency paper, for that is what happens when clerks are employed by banks to draw lines at half-yearly intervals in order to increase the paper assets of the bank by immense sums of usury or compound interest. This is the most dangerous form of over production known to economics, because it is the over production of dangerous machinery. It is the over production of pumps which distend the skin of society, and cause the fabric of society to shake, as the bubble which contains it alternately relaxes and stretches to bursting point.

II.

The currency, like the wealth, of England in the post-last-war years was inflated. Increased by an astronomical debt and further increased by the flotation of large luxury industries, the money of England, however related to gold, was not organically related to the needs of a healthy community. Without attempting to draw or describe any ultimate distinction or difference between

useful wealth and useless wealth, creative wealth and uncreative wealth, one is justified in supposing that the expenditure of money on works and commodities which satisfy labour, and increase satisfied labour, is ultimately more worth while than the expenditure of money on things transitory and unreal; on alcoholic excess for example, or on idle forms. Reasoning on those lines, one is inclined to the belief that the production and increase of money for its own sake was deleterious to the commonwealth. It gave a power over the organization of life to people who existed remote from life. If money talks, it is apt to talk scepticism and heresy, if not nonsense. If money in invoked, it tends to respond to formulae and incantations of a monetary character only. Thus the company promoters of London, in deciding where to invest their money and the money of their clients, were interested only in the short term value of the undertakings they capitalized. Was there enough substance in the undertaking, in the manufacture of gramophone needles, or cigarette paper, or in the building of luxury flats, to enable the entrepreneur to carry on with an appearance of prosperity until he and his friends could unload.

The products and by-products of processes such as this are not gramophone needles, cigarette paper and luxury flats; but what has proved much less helpful to the community even than those worthless articles; that is, the commission of brokers and of estate agents, the profits of speculators, the premium income of insurance companies and the interest of banks. And these processes involve, further, the consumption of much wealth that could have been better employed; for example, the mortgaging of middle class assets in order to invest, which is precisely what the gambler does when he loses his yacht and his country house at the roulette tables. No economist in the world, however vague about ultimates, would say that this was a healthy circulation of wealth. Moreover, the psychological effect was bad. During the last two decades, in England only less than in America, the public was gambling irresponsibly. A liquidated bourgeoisie was trying to find a quick way to solvency. A government which

controlled the gambling of the working classes indirectly could find no means of preventing the demoralized plunging of those who had some assets left. It would, undoubtedly, have been more charitable (in many ways), and better economy, if the thing had taken the form of a national lottery or sweepstake.

The country as a whole was illustrating a truth which should be regarded as an economic axiom, that one cannot aim at a fortune and make a living. Fortunes were made, however, and that, incidentally, served to widen the gulf between rich and poor. Thus the flotation of a chain store not only makes money for the promoters and shareholders, but it eliminates the middle man, and, in the long run, the middle class. The money that is made in a chain store is wages and interest; there is nothing there to correspond in reality (as distinct from theory) with the normal earnings of the shopkeeper. The economic position of those affected is analogous to the quality of the mass produced goods sold in those stores, when these are compared to the better and more carefully produced products of older businesses.

Needless to say, the capital market-garden in which these blossoms grew was the close preserve of those who garnered it.

This account of a misdirected economy finds a parallel in the account of the whole political system of the last two decades. The joint stock state has been run in such a way that there were only profits available for those in a position to speculate in the shares. The defects in the system correspond as opposites to what Communists refer to when they speak of planning. Also the defects in the system imply the absence of that intimacy between all parts of the system, that coherence of the entire system with itself, which is the ideal result of democratic institution. The problem is not solved by mere redistribution. The commonwealth, the wealth of the public, is something living and growing. Its essence is life and reproduction This means organization and wise direction, not dissection and distribution in a narrow sense. The problem, also, is much more difficult for an old and encrusted economy like that of England than it is for a country with the inexhaustible natural resources of the United States or Soviet Union.

If the North Sea Bubble is not to end, like the South Sea Bubble, in general insolvency, the resources of the country, and of more than the country, must be integrated in a planned effort; such an effort, for example, as the war effort. In considering the possibility of such an effort, one must recognize the limits of the resources. The kind of planning which Communism calls for, may be a poor man's ideal; but it needs the resources of the rich to carry it through.

It is an open question whether Britain, at the end of this war, will be a rich country in any real sense of the phrase. Her monopolies will have largely vanished, though they may be restored in part if rival and upstart Empires suffer the annihilation that they have invited. But already, before the war, it was becoming clear that the basis of English wealth was changing. The Labour Theory of Value does not and cannot describe English wealth; but it is true that latterly the principal British export has been Labour. England enjoys the resources of a population which is good at industry and skilled in the carrying of goods by sea, and, in war time, good at defending principles that nobody else troubles to defend. Unfortunately, functions like the carrying trade depend far too much on the equipment of other nations, and on the general industrial position, to correspond to any reliable constituent of wealth, just as in war time British sacrifices depend, for their recognition and existence as economic values, on the readiness of richer countries to treat them as contributions to the world's wealth and as a valid reason for refraining from the enforcement of hard bargains.

It may be that England's wealth will increase and be real again after the war. For a time it will be real even in its present form, because of the dereliction that has fallen on so many of the world's productive centres and because of the destruction of German, Japanese, to say nothing of French and Italian, competitors. For a longer time it may increase, if scientific development succeeds in harnessing for Britain even a minute fraction of the country's latent resources. But these will be temporary enrichments, destined to be eclipsed by the actualization of those larger

potentials of wealth which are the United States, the Soviet Union, the Chinese Republic, and the relatively unexploited, because so far neglected, Latin American States.

These nations will sooner or later be able to buy our machinery from us as Germany and Japan did, or to make machinery of their own that may be as good as ours ; and we are unlikely to be able ever to produce in England products that will compete with the foods, fats and minerals with which they are so well endowed.

In classical terms, the problem is one of production, not of distribution. But the unfavourable limiting context of British production can be widened if British wealth is restated as part of a wider economy which is the English speaking world, its satellites, and its friendly stars. The future of the British Empire as a unit is so obscure that one can base no safe prediction on it. Modern tendencies in the British Empire are centrifugal not centripetal. The parts are flying off. Whether British and Imperial Statesmen will ever succeed in restating the Empire as a unit is almost as difficult a question, and contains as remote an aspiration, as the question and hope of world unity in all political and economic fields.

Meanwhile a reintegration of British working capacity, freed from the heavy exploitation which is money lending, may in itself enhance the economic strength of that part of the world which is England. If enemies are to be conquered, Empires to be exploited, allies to be taken into collaboration, obstructive vested interest must not be allowed to thwart the enterprise.

But one thing is certain. A mere change in the direction of national affairs, a mere change in the ownership of wealth in the form of currency, though undoubtedly necessary to prevent the uneconomic practices of gambling and usury, is manifestly insufficient to make any nation competent for large undertakings or to turn again an impoverished country into a prosperous one. Moreover, it remains lamentably true that the anti-productive interests of English investors have also been a considerable source of the cash which in recent emergencies has been so important an adjunct to the national character. It appears unfortunately true

that the reform of British economic life in order to eliminate the vices of financialism will also impoverish the country to some extent before the better results become manifest.

From the reactionary point of view, whatever is done, there is sufficient of nature in economics to make it clear that a very small country cannot be as rich as a very large country. The reactionary clings therefore to the historical accidents that have made England Financier and Employer of this planet. Banking on the temporary prosperity that may immediately follow this war, they ignore the more recent historical accidents that have changed all that. The truth is that, in a more articulated society, with clearer needs and better organized resources, and a more universalized adaptability in all nations, England may be destined to lose most of the elements of monopoly that she has possessed. (May, it should be emphasized, not must !). She may, on the other hand, discover new wealth, or, without it, emerge again as the co-ordinator of the world's effort. It is abundantly clear that in any such effort the interests to be served will not be the interests of private capital, whether in the hands of individual owners or labour organizations. Consequently, it must be clearly understood that the new economy, deprived as it is of the fortuitous financial benefits that accrue from exploitation, will be a far more difficult system to plan and to manage than was the old.

Yet there is reason to believe that if the resources of the world are integrated, in peace, to an international effort on the scale of war there is no limit to the prosperity that can be produced by and distributed among the denizens of our island and of the globe.

PART IV.

PROLOGUE TO RECONSTRUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

ECONOMICS OF CONSTRUCTION AND DESTRUCTION.

THE most serious criticism that can be advanced against the British or, indeed, the world economy is that it finds prosperity in war; only finds constructive resources in the midst of destruction. During the war the pumps of society are primed with currency; money circulates, labour is inspired to greater efforts—be it noted, largely by money; and at the end of the war victorious nations maintain their treasuries in apparent opulence because the needs of society are great for industrial remobilization and for rebuilding—which is mainly the building of many houses and factories. But the bad feature that persists in a capitalistic society escapes notice. Only when boom degenerates into slump do people realize that all that they have enjoyed is a certain amount of excitement.

The evil does not consist merely in the fact that the economic system is geared with currency. The important factor seems to be this: that money is only dynamic in response to scarcities which people can pay to replenish. It is almost a commonplace of economic theory that people only seem to be rich when the world is desperately short of something. Then there is demand. But when there is plenty in the world, then everybody seems very poor, because supply is excessive and nobody pays anybody. The reason is that in peace time the mechanism of social economics consists in the ability and readiness of individuals to part with money. Therein lies the difference between war and peace, which

is concealed in post war reconstruction, and only becomes manifest when a less dynamic phase of peace reveals a poverty in plenty, which is the obverse of the wealth in extravagance that was war.

In war we have planning; in peace there is no planning. In War we have sharing—really free exchange of what matters—in peace we have monopoly. In war society makes a joint effort which enables the world not only to feed itself and clothe itself and shelter itself abundantly but also to employ many millions of men to destroy without ceasing immense quantities of most expensive apparatus, of which the least elaborate item, the ordinary bullet, is vastly more expensive than a loaf of bread. In peace time the height of ingenuity seems to consist in the destruction of large crops, so as to create scarcities which, in turn, will maintain price levels calculated indirectly to save the ammunition of governments from being turned against their riotous and hungry subjects.

The difference can be expressed in another way. In peace time wealth is generated by the enhancement of the speed of the circulation of money, through the hands of individuals, by way of exchange for the products of labour paid for in money. The profit shown by society is the increased utility of money in being, because money circulating fast amounts to more money than money circulating sluggishly. Increase of currency is only a convenient variation of this. Any real increment of wealth depends on whether the increased volume of money has produced more stock of a type that not only satisfies but stimulates further production.

In war the machinery is different. In war wealth is pooled so as to organize vastly more labour, and a vastly wider distribution of the products of labour, than is possible in an ordinary peace. War while it lasts is communistic in some degree, because it shares and it plans. In so far as the resources used in warfare are raised by loans that are destined to be repaid, war is formally capitalistic. When it is realized, however, that most of the loans of warfare cannot be repaid, or can only be repaid at enormous discount, then it becomes evident that war is communistic in effect, because, in the magnitude of the effort, the capalist integument of

society bursts and the forces of the world have temporary play uncontrolled by laws of property and rates of interest.

What the Western nations achieved, in spite of their creditors, during the last war, and are achieving, with better will on the part of their creditors, in this, corresponds logically to what was achieved by the Bolsheviks, with untold hardships, and not without cruelties, in their reorganization and recolonization of the immensities of Russia. Their machinery was precisely the same as ours; compulsory pooling and centralized planning. And, after the sacrifice of much immediate, perceptible, wealth—the wealth of individuals—they found themselves able to produce, from what had once been desert, quantities of riches that dwarf the total resources of Czardom. In the same way, disregarding the moral achievements of the war, the United Nations have in this war acquired, through pooling and planning, a quantity of armaments and an increase in industrial productivity which in peace time would have seemed fantastic. It remains to be seen whether this total effort involves the ultimate impoverishment of the world or its enrichment.

In the answer to this question lies the difference between the genuinely socialist approach and the capitalistic approach to economic fundamentals. Communism and Socialism are more realistic in their attitude to destruction than is the capitalist. If the world pauses to assess the economic value of all its lost lives, lost buildings, lost materials, irreparable damage, and irrepayable debt, then the expenditure exceeds all possibilities of replacement. But if the resultant state is regarded from the standpoint of dynamic economy, if regard is had to the heightened efficiency of the world, and if ancient rights and titles to property are disregarded, and society is looked at afresh, for what it is, and what are the needs of its people, then there is no reason to regard a post war society as impoverished. Only those parts of it are impoverished whose wealth consisted in rights that have been lost. But those rights in any event were empty forms to all except their beneficiaries. And even then, societies which have lost their monopolies and their protections still enjoy, if

they have any moral claim on the world, a right to participate in the pooling and sharing, according to desert, or according to need, of quantities and varieties of wealth which the advance of science shows to be well nigh infinite. In this process the Labour Theory of Value comes true, and in turn becomes inadequate.

Two logical, and psychological, stages require to be traversed before capitalistic society is capable of communistic effort. Within capitalism itself there are degrees of breadth and narrowness. We have seen the difference between the generous, or enlightened, beneficiary of self interest who will allow the use of his property, or his good offices, or his labour, if he does not lose by it; and that other, meaner, but in a bad age typical, specimen, who will not allow any benefit to flow from that which is his unless he is paid a profit or other rate of interest. In war time, by government compulsion, as well as by the stimulation of public sentiment, society tends to be relieved from the pressure of the extortioner who will swallow his own economic salivations rather than irrigate the ground with them. In war self-interest becomes relatively enlightened, as it does also in a time of prosperity. But that transition is not enough. In war sacrifices are called for; and in war people endure sacrifices which they know in their hearts will not, because they cannot, be repaid; and they endure and undertake economic sacrifices because they know that, failing those, they will lose, as others are losing, very much more than material wealth and property.

To those who see the world as a whole the sacrifice of vast rights is not necessarily a total loss. Also it is a necessity. For whichever reason of these may be relevant, certain it is that at the international level, where immensities of finance are concerned, capitalistic society has shown itself capable of a communistic psychology. Perhaps the truth is that people are less responsible where billions are concerned than they are over units. Perhaps, on the other hand, vision is still an operative factor in political life. The result, however achieved, is that larger gifts have been made to the world in war time than were dreamed of in times of peace. The rescue services of the world have proved nobler

than the preventive services. The Lease Lend Act of America is in every way a compensation for the mischievous Neutrality Act which came into being under the same Consul.

When, eventually, the supreme Court of the United States considers the language of the Lease Lend Act in the light of the *ejusdem generis* rule, and when they consider whether it was in the powers of Congress " to transfer " the property of the Union in exchange for no reward, then we shall know whether the Lease Lend Act was intentionally communistic or unintentionally altruistic. But whatever be the ultimate decision, it is reasonable to anticipate that what was put into the common pool will not come out again. America has already suffered one severe consequence of attempted large scale debt collecting. Moreover, there is reason to believe that adversity has made Roosevelt's America into a more moral country than was the America of Harding and Coolidge. If it turns out that the Lease Lend Act of America means what it does, rather than what it says, then the Peace will start under the auspices of a splendid and colossal example in the international pooling of wealth for a common purpose. That, and the planning which has been, and will be, necessary, seem likely to make the communistic attitude a *fait accompli* in the international order. And, since the public sacrifices will be borne considerably by private owners, the way will be open for the technique of planning in the individual capitalistic states.

But that stage achieved is not the solution of the world's economic problems. Rather it represents the restatement of the world's problems in a context uncomplicated by many factors and brackets, but none the less complex, and not without complexities of its own. The economic transition is from arithmetic to algebra, or from algebra to an even more generalized system of matrices ; but a world stated in the new terms may well present difficulties for solution that have only been ignored so far because in the old language they were not evident.

If problems were lacking to the mathematicians of the new economic order this war is destined to replenish the supply.

Already the war has created situations not only to which the technique of capitalism is inadequate, but in which expectations based on accepted ethical principles are unlikely to be capable of fulfilment. Thus the immensity of the moral, unusurious, claim for compensation on the part of those who have lost the economic foundation of their lives, and the equally moral claim to reward on the part of those who have earned reward (if anybody ever did), is such that it cannot be satisfied by means of payments in money without rendering currency into a worthless absurdity. Nor can these things be paid for, as yet, by the giving of gifts of the products of labour, or of the land, without involving the enslavement of some part of the world at least in order to provide these benefits. Nor can the wrongdoers pay Reparation.

In other words the inflation of currency, or the wrongly planned distension of the whole wealth system, is the only way of paying for the war in any conventional way. And the British government, at least, seems to have recognized this truth by using the Insurance money of its policy holders as ordinary revenue.

Compensation and reward are, in many contexts, so evidently human necessities that society would be profoundly unhappy without them. But they can only be achieved—and then only partly achieved—indirectly and as an aspect of an economic reorganization designed to put the resources of the world at the disposal of the inhabitants of the world. And in this progress many private rights and many private, even just, claims will inevitably be denied.

Nor is this an exhaustive statement of the problem. The problem is more than economic, because economic problems on this scale resolve themselves readily into political conflicts. Economics is a measurement of value, not a decision on valuations involving choice and obedience. And if it were merely a domestic political question it could no doubt be solved by any given democratic nation, because democracy does eventually succeed in expressing the fundamental desires and needs of a self-articulating population. But unfortunately self-articulating populations are not self-subsistent populations. Owing to the division of labour,

and the division of the earth's products between far flung places, and owing to the consequent economic adjustments according to the highly developed financial system that has emerged from human nature, no solution of economic problems can be undertaken by any nation or empire on any assumption of isolation, or without adjustment to the needs and demands of most of the rest of the world.

Certainly for a country like England the question of solvency within its own system is inseparable from the question of solvency with reference beyond the system. The creditor of England exists inside and outside England. The wealth of the external creditor exists inside the country, and the wealth of the internal creditor exists outside the country; and, even if this were not so, there still could be no solution less than international to the economic problems of this entity which happens to depend for existence on its position as moral leader and physical water carrier for all the other nations.

We have already seen that the greatest present planning and pooling effective in the world is an international one. Generally, the economics of reconstruction are international economics and must be considered in the light of the whole theory of international relationship.

Secondly, these undertakings make it evident that the economic order stands in need of greater and better political systems than we at present enjoy. The major problem of modern economics is probably a political problem, expressing the difficulties of Democracy. Even an International solution of any particular problem presupposes these difficulties. A solution of the problems of South Wales along the lines of a pooling arrangement with the United States, or the Argentine, or all nations together, becomes automatically void, if, say, the government of the Argentine becomes Fascistic, or if the citizens of the United States or those that succeed in influencing them, decide that they are tired of New Deals or Straight Deals or International Morality, and require a renewal of Isolationism and hard bargaining. In arriving at such a decision, and implementing it, they

will be adhering to the forms of Democracy, however far from its spirit.

Prior then to economic reform is political reform—and all political, all economic reformative efforts imply and express the need of the world for a different psychological attitude on the part of all people to their political and their economic life. Not the least of the difficulties inherent in a programme of reforms on socialist lines consists precisely in this : that a programme of reform which merely makes the Government into a purveyor of needs and things desired is in danger of creating a mentality, or, rather, completing the development of a mentality which already exists, the mentality which makes political decisions, and all ethical decisions, in the light of some immediate need. Under the aspect of that mentality he is a good ruler who provides me with a policy congenial to my interests. I vote, therefore, against anyone whose interest is likely to be adverse to mine. That is the mentality which must be changed so that economics can be reformed, so that the international order can be properly organized, and so that we may rid ourselves of the worst features of our badly directed Joint Stock State.

CHAPTER II.

THE SHAPE OF EMANCIPATION.

I.

IT must be recognised at the outset by the would be reformers of the world that very little will be done if people are content to leave to history the unfolding of a pattern of conflict which will ultimately result in harmony. There is considerable doubt, in the light of modern experience, whether discord produces harmony, and whether there is any virtue in history to account for the contingent fact that we were saved for a time, in this generation, by the accidental circumstance that the people who find fellowship in the speaking of a difficult North European language happened to possess between them the majority of the world's steel and some control over the majority of the world's population.

Nor must it be supposed that redemption is the solution of an equation in which one unknown is the State, and the other unknown the power of that wide class, called Working Class, which is now becoming articulate. If it be taken for granted that the world will proceed, from this moment onward, on the assumption that nations are units, that nations harmonize, and that all nations are dedicated to the proposition that the hire is unworthy of the labourer, it will remain true that economic organization is difficult and dangerous, and it will be true that the problems of society, having been only partly stated, are further than ever from being solved.

II.

In the first place, the class or classes to which expression is given must be resolved, in the last analysis, into individuals. In any social system that supervenes their lives will require to be

organized, their disputes will require to be arbitrated; their claims will prove difficult to satisfy and intransigent to exact formulation.

In the second place, it is futile to suppose that any solution of any problems is necessarily achieved if the State makes itself the economic unit. Discounting the contention of the self-interested that the State is less efficient in its enterprises than are the holders of private capital, it is yet evident that the State is at its best when it is adapted for large scale co-ordinated effort calculated to influence large masses of mankind as totalities. The State is good at war. The State is good at controls and plans that set limits to average conduct on the part of masses of men and women. But the State is suspect when it begins to probe into the minutiae of economic life, just as it is suspect when it selects individuals for discriminative treatment rather than rules them by universal rules.

For the State to undertake the direct management of every shop, every factory, every place of amusement, every home, would amount, putting it at its lowest, to a most awkward and uneconomical organization of the Division of Labour. The classifications of men and commodities that are useful to state departments controlling a war effort are much too wide to give an exhaustive description of the detail of every-day life in a peaceful world. The State has no principles which enable it to decide what amount of tobacco or chocolate is desirable in a given urban Shop. The State is, admittedly, competent to decide that, in general, too much tobacco is being consumed in the country, and to legislate accordingly; but that question only arises when tobacco production happens to be a factor internally related to the life of the State and to the fulfilment of its functions, which are public functions. The private domain of individuals, although it is unfenced against the State, remains external to the State; remains private not public. If that is true, then the State in its proper capacity remains regulative, not constitutive, of individual and of economic life; remains, to a degree, negative in its operations; remains the controller and the planner, but not a claimant

to be, exhaustively, the detail and the subject matter of the life it controls and plans.

The State can only be useful in the improvement of life above its present level of integration if it takes the organic reality of that life for granted. The State, however ambitious its aims, will leave to individuals their enterprises, at least until those enterprises assume a proportion, and adopt a direction, which makes them dangerous to the commonwealth. Thrift, and a measure of enterprise, are too important in the machinery of society, and in the psychology of groups, to be dissipated by State planning. The danger comes into being when the beneficiary of thrift, or, worse, his heirs and successors, uses the product of thrift as an instrument of power. Thus the householder is good; the large-scale landlord is bad. Between them is the small rentier, and the heir. These the State encroaches upon, for good and ill. Obviously, there was a time in history when, in an empty world, there was room for individuals to regard and treat, if they were advanced enough, particular pieces of territory as their own. But when acquisitiveness of that kind became important, as it is now, and more urgent in its demands, and when it appeared that the growth of population in given areas was thwarted by territorial acquisitions, then we found ourselves in a situation which called for control and planning by the State. If land is so scarce that the only effective control is complete sequestration, with or without recompense, then the State is only fulfilling its function by becoming sole land owner, using to that end whatever methods appear necessary to its democratic councils.

And so with commodities; and so with money. But society is at a stage of development at the moment when the flow of commodities can be left relatively uncontrolled. Only when commodities take on national significance is control called for; for example, in Britain, over coal and iron; in Peru, over coffee production. And, of course, in considering whether the significance of any commodity is national, the State is entitled to have regard to the living conditions of the producers, to whatever class they belong, and to any undertakings to which the State

is pledged, for whatever reason material or moral, to other nations in particular or in general.

Similarly, money is an almost indispensable piece of machinery in the running of ordinary life. The Division of Labour exists and is good in principle; some sort of money is the only function that can enable people to take advantage of the economy which the Division of Labour effects. On the other hand, when accumulations of money enable individuals and corporations to tyrannize over their fellow citizens of the world, then it behoves the State to interfere. Then the State operates by prohibiting usuries, by controlling prices, by controlling international exchanges to the best of its ability; and, not least, by taxation, which is a stone that kills many birds.

III.

The foregoing are examples of legitimate State Enterprise. And they are legitimate because they are admittedly desirable, and because only the State is strong enough and sufficiently equipped to carry them out. To this catalogue may be added, without any claim to categorical exhaustiveness, a list of the undertakings that the State already regards as its proper functions: education, public health, town planning, communications, the organization of defence, etc., etc. In every one of its activities the State intrudes upon private life and deprives individuals of some physical scope which is part of their freedom; but, if the State is acting wisely, any diminution of freedom should be capable of being explained as a preservation of more freedom, of freedom more important, in kind and quality, than the freedom which is restricted. The limiting case is war, in which all freedom is sacrificed in an emergency, to the ultimate preservation of all freedom. As to the value of whatever Freedom is sacrificed or secured, that derives from the civilization which, it is assumed, the State embodies.

There are, it follows, at the ordinary level of politics, decisions to be made which carry the significance that they go to the roots of the whole order of politics. In the formation of these decisions, in these judgments of political value, the State is trusted, because, at the democratic level, the political values coincide in general with the dominant values of ordinary life. The State, at the democratic level, tends to express material interests which, by reason of the heritage of civilization that is ours, do no violence to those ethical values which, changing always, are yet relatively constant in contrast to the pragmatic demands of any given moment. If the State has difficulty in maintaining its course along generally ethical lines, then that is so because the State is expressing either a general hysteria, or else the demands of a *faction which popular neglect, and the exploitation of technical* defects, have enabled to take control of the State.

If this particular danger is thought out, it will be realized that the political machinery of society which constitutes the organs of State is still defective. And, if this in turn is thought about, the student of politics will find himself face to face with the classical vicious circle of politics; the lack of that moral spirit which prevents institutions from being abused; and the defective form of institutions which prevents the good spirit from making itself more than indirectly felt in political life.

The last desiderata, then, are politically technical and psychological. *And the psychological is the more important*, because a psychological momentum in society can sweep aside bad institutions without difficulty. The aim of the modern State is, however, to remove the technical barriers to reform and the barriers to expression, so that the whole system shall not be swept away by the flood which its present forms are forcing into overflow. What these specific reforms are is beyond the scope of a work concerned with general principles. Suffice it to say that there will always be some need for reform as society develops. At the present stage the emphasis appears to be on economic reforms; but the emphasis really is on a problem of authority—that is, the need for society, through the State, to control those economic

forces which reduce individual personality below the moral level of political responsibility, and which profit by the moral weakness of the system that remains, to vest with political and moral authority the exponents of interests sufficiently unenlightened to be politically immoral, and sufficiently strong to be dangerous to the future of any system that calls itself Democratic.

CHAPTER III.

RESPONSIBILITY AND THE PROFIT MOTIVE.

WHAT we stand most in need of now is the return of responsibility. Unfortunately it happens that the movements which are reformative of society in the present generation make their appeal so strongly through their mystical glamour and technical efficiency that society seems set on a course away from individualism, away from the clear thinking and exact judgments which can only come from individuals, and is committed to a development of political forms, which, though well inspired, are dangerous on account of the scope that they offer to the irresponsible. Society, in evolving a machinery to express it, has created a machinery that can also destroy it; a system of mechanical organization, of which the purposes are not clear, and the control is doubtful, and in which there is nothing to prevent a foolish technician from pressing a switch that can explode the whole system, just as an irresponsible soldier, without immediate harm to himself, can purposelessly and destructively explode a distant mine.

But a century of individualism has shown us that the alternative system (some would say absence of system) contains no safeguards that collectivism lacks and has less compensation to offer for its inefficiencies. This is not strictly true as an indictment of individualism. In a rich world, relatively uncrowded, the individual is a good custodian of his own welfare, and is not without social virtues. But what is really being condemned is not individualism, but rather that process of individual aggrandisement through which individualism develops self destructive contradictions. Irresponsibility is the characteristic of the too powerful individual, whose enterprises achieve socially significant

dimensions, while he fails to achieve any conception of social duty.

That is accepted and understood now. The present day problem is the dynamic one of introducing responsibility into social and economic power, with the aid of classes that have been so long divorced from authority that they can only visualise emancipation as working blindly for the State at better wages than they received from private employers.

In economic life we see this irresponsibility in action, when, in the desperate urgencies of production, the worker, whose hand is now uppermost, tries, not inhumanly, to secure at every stage compensations that are looming within reach. In politics this irresponsibility has been reflected in the vagueness and economic utopianism of the voters and delegates to whom the well meaning Liberals, all over Europe, surrendered their traditional strongholds in anticipation of events.

On the whole working class irresponsibility has been morally less harmful to the world than individualistic excess of power, because the workers, when they see themselves emancipated from immediate needs, show themselves unsophisticated and generous. Indeed the working classes of England in particular enjoy a fine tradition of magnanimity. When their employers, a century ago, welcomed a bully in the pay of the Hapsburgs, the uninformed proletariat of England knew enough to maltreat him and drive him from their factories. Ninety years later they manifested the same sympathy when another part of the old Hapsburg Empire was retaken into captivity.

Again when, in the 1860's, Lincoln discovered that his Civil War was being fought for the emancipation of slaves, the cotton operatives of Rochdale (and, be it said to their credit, the mill owners under the immortal leadership of John Bright) sacrificed the good will of their best customers, the Southern States, and declared themselves for the Union. A later generation of the same workers voiced, more loudly than any other class, that indignation against Turkish atrocities which eventually moved Gladstone to his greatest flights of oratory. It was only when the working

class found itself intellectualized and parliamentarian that it found itself unable to move its MacDonalds and Snowdens to the protests against German cruelties that might have been expected from the legatees of such great traditions.

If any conclusion can be drawn from a short period in which labour has been articulate, that conclusion is that the worker, rather than the owner, is on the side of the angels. Unfortunately, he is still either a victim of social pressure, or, if relatively emancipated, a victim of a type of thinking which does him less than justice. At the time of writing, the working classes of England are finding their feet, and their voices. In the furtherance of a difficult campaign the British government has revolutionized its economy, and has succeeded, by heavy taxations and borrowings, and the use of their proceeds in large scale public employment, direct and indirect, in redistributing the national wealth so that the majority possess not only earning power but savings. The beneficiaries of these economic reorganizations will be the ruling class at the end of the next few general elections. The question, then, is whether they will manifest, even in their own interests, as much, or as little, responsibility as their predecessors in economic influence and political power.

The temptations that were offered to those whose influence is now waning, was, quite crudely, money sufficient to maintain them in the style to which they were accustomed, and the prospect of the continuance of an economy in which those returns would continue returning. The temptation that will be offered to the new classes is the acceptance of an improved standard of living beyond their previous experience, but meaningless if it is contingent on the vicissitudes of a world which they are not strong minded enough to control.

Theirs will be also a Profit Motive, a more permanent and human motive than the desperate exorbitance of enterprisers turned money-lenders and resolutely determined that nobody should enjoy anything without paying seigneurage and tolls. The lesser Profit Motive cannot be eradicated from society; nor is eradication desirable. What is desirable is that men and women

shall be relieved from social pressure sufficiently to exercise their judgments in politics, and in the whole of behaviour, fairly, dispassionately, responsibly. This calls for psychological changes which are so vast that they at least must be left to history. All that modern reformers can do is to make certain that reform itself shall be along lines that generate individual thinking, and individual decision against a background of independence, and that society shall not be geared to a vast machine which will produce from itself no one knows what psychological monsters and prodigies.

In other words, the attitude of any modern reformer should be determined by the recognition that conditions have changed, and are changing, in the direction of economic equalities. That being realized, his duty is to see that the political machinery of the age, as well as the economic machinery, be reformed so as to give expression to the new forces, so that they shall preserve the best of the ancient values (because they are values, not because they are ancient); and this is best done by emancipating politics from the habit systems of partisanship, and emancipating, by education—including that best of education which is opportunity for expression—the vast numbers of individuals on the stability of whose individual characters the future of civilization rests.

It is only necessary, in order to generate the best conditions for this future internal political development, that the wealth of this country be more intelligently used than it has been in the past. Britain now has at its disposal more labour power than ever in its history. If useful activity is found for all this, then at least the desperation will have departed that embittered and distorted the national political economy during the last two decades. And the activity that is sought need not be regimentation. To adapt the phrase of a great liberal, let them be given acres in Middlesex, not dragooned into armies to fight for principalities in Utopia.

CHAPTER IV.

NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM.

I.

IT is already clear, from the course of the present struggle, that many economic problems, which were not soluble in the competitive period of nationalism, are soluble by international co-operation. If evidence of a trend to Economic Internationalism is wanted, the present economic guidance of England affords it, because the whole of our present policy transcends, in its implications, the limits of Nationalism.

If Nationalism were to set the limits of our economic plans, then obviously there could be no assurance that the state of England would continue to be solvency. A vast expenditure is going on now, without wrecking our economy, only because of the joint controls that dominate the financial, commercial, and industrial markets.

Let us suppose, then, that the war were to end to-morrow. Our country at least would be filled with currency, and with people anxious to acquire that currency by selling their labour and their goods at the highest prices. The whole of savings, the unspent wages of a returning army, the compensations for damage and injury, the refunds of taxation, would constitute direct spending power, and the relatively unredeemable investments would be the collateral on which the Banks would issue even more currency and speed its circulation.

The obvious and only preventive of the consequent inflation is "control." But, if that is examined in the conditions of peace, it will be seen that this is theoretically impossible without international restriction. With the gold standard in being it would be commercially impossible. Without the gold standard there

must be either what amounts to tariff-war, with governments, rather than protected merchants, as the protagonists, or there must be peace ensured by currency agreements and pooling systems to guide each state's own traders and to influence directly or indirectly the traders of other nations.

But in devising controls and schemes and moratoria, factors will have to be reckoned with which are not purely economic. Economic terms alone cannot justify an undertaking like the American Lease-Lend Act unless it be accepted that a moral effort, such as the present effort of England, is economically worthwhile to the world; and that cannot be true while economics is stated in shopkeeping terms. At the moment, a nation of manufacturers has it in its power to reduce a nation of shopkeepers to bankruptcy; and will not do so because the same shopkeepers happen to work at nights as watch and ward in the world's dark places. There is, therefore, some valuation according to which these deserve financing beyond the limits set by their power to deposit security. And this is recognized by governments, though not yet by individuals.

The limits that have been set in the past on prosperity have been set both by national proprietorship and by private proprietorship. The latter is being progressively controlled by the former. On the other hand, this is being concealed because individuals of a new type are beginning to co-operate across the borders of nations with success. Cartels are in point. International postal services, labour organizations, and Red Cross have enjoyed practical successes. There exists, moreover, between the workers of the world, at least as much sympathy and understanding as existed among diplomats in their professional heyday. From that the Communist has argued that the State is a meaningless form. This is one more consequence that does not follow from the premises.

Just as unselfishness is compatible with and, indeed, only has meaning in a context of separate selves, so internationalism does not involve the abolition of nationality, military, ethical or linguistic—least of all economic. Only the barren logic of the

unsubtle among the Hegelians operates to abolish differences. True harmony is a synthesis of differences, not their abolition. Moreover, it is surely better that the units of economic life should be well defined, powerful and trustworthy, should be nations, in fact, rather than private Cartel organizers. Further, the economic theorist, in order to be practical, must recognize that Socialism and Communism have passed from the Anarchism of the Marxians to the State Communism of the followers of Lenin. Nevertheless, the Communist principle is now established that the welfare of nations is inseparable from economic welfare of individuals, inseparable from the economic welfare of other nations and their subjects ; and that welfare is only achieved by the elimination of those monopolies and inequitable powers that clog the operation of a useful Division of Labour between man and man, between people and people.

II.

The present position of world economics, however, remains relatively rigid. Determinants consist in such a fact as the need of a place like Lancashire to export cotton and the disinclination of Indians to accept it ; in such a fact as the agricultural nature of Canada, and the industrial nature of England and Germany. Yet economics can be infinitely elastic. We live in an age when science has put into our hands an infinite capacity for production. There is enough energy in a tea-cup full of water to drive an aeroplane to the moon if we only knew how. There is resource in chemistry to enable us to grow the roots of Europe under the tubes and tunnels of London and Birmingham if we wish to use our energy that way. It is a platitude that in this age people starve while crops are burned. The only assignable reason is that the distribution of wealth is tied, by the present principles of exchange, to local production.

There is nothing in theory, and little in practice, to prevent the pooling of the world's grain resources, and the financing of grain producers, according to the productivity of the whole rather

than of the part. There is nothing strikingly difficult in the accountancy involved in a financing of the coal producers of South Wales by the coal consumers of countries that do not happen to deal with South Wales. A Joint Stock Bank in its everyday routine undertakes more complicated transactions. So can the State; so can the world. And the undertaking does not call for the abolition of national differences. What it calls for is the abolition of the principle that what I have belongs to me even if it chokes me.

At the commencement of its history, so-called Capitalism was not so stupid. England built up an Empire with the aid of financial intelligence; Holland created wealth by creating customers. But a quantitative change in Capitalist enterprise has made imaginative undertaking qualitatively difficult. The customer is now the one who can pay for a foreseeable time, not the most profitable producer in the long run. Immediate returns are necessary in a competitive world. The modern Capitalist thinks that he can only afford to act as financier on prompt and usurious terms. We have seen the consequent process until eventually usury has grown into an industry of its own and turned the medium of exchange into an instrument to prevent exchange. In this way, the wheels of the economic machinery have been clogged; the very exponents of short-term finance have found that they have ruined their own fellow-countrymen. Competition has become self-destructive and only the salutary process of destruction, which is going on now, makes it possible for the conception of a better and freer economic machinery to be conceived.

III.

The changes that are required before international action can be possible or effective are much more complex than any that could be resolved by a mere association of states. Clearly international processes, in order to be successful and sufficiently permanent, must be compatible with the interests of the peoples of the various countries concerned; must be undertaken, not by

empty sovereignties, but by authorities supported by the consent of the groups that they govern.

At the time of writing, schemes are being propounded pursuant to which individuals shall be frustrated if they endeavour to upset the international exchanges. Such measures as the pegging of currencies are desirable, and possible, even to present day sovereign authorities. But if society wishes to go further, and to direct its affairs to the extent of controlling production, organizing markets, and the like, then either governments must have a completer control over individuals than is compatible with their own interests (for their speculative subjects are also their tax payers), or else the international machinery must be adequate to operate across the borders of nations, and not merely between sovereign entities. We have seen the need for the internal reform of Sovereignties. In addition, and in support of this, it is necessary that International forces, and that means in practice the forces of any power participant in the international order, must enjoy a similar power, at least, over individuals from all nations, to that which belligerents enjoy over the merchantmen of neutrals.

In this phase of international politics, Socialism or Communism has not so far shown itself practically constructive. Socialism or Communism, when it is thought out, does indeed imply an attitude to sovereignty which is critical, and which is sympathetic to the limitation of sovereignties. The socialist can contemplate the surrender of sovereign rights for a purpose which he knows to be good; and can indeed contemplate an appeal beyond the sovereignty that binds him when the sovereign power violates the postulates of politics. Animated by that principle some Germans look beyond their present regime to the forces that are arrayed against it for salvation. On the other hand there is evidence in the present world that the Socialist can allow his horizon to be set by the borders of the State which rules him. Obviously Socialism at its present stage does not provide a formula for international politics and international economics. But in socialistically inspired developments, like the International

Labour Office, there is already some technique available for at least the imposition of regulative categories on the behaviour of nations. How far effective those precedents will be remains to be seen when the internationalist thinkers decide what functions require to be discharged by international, rather than national, units in the creation of the post war economy.

IV.

Because of the differences that obtain between nations it is reasonable to suppose that, for a long time ahead, international powers will not penetrate very deeply into municipal fields. The best hope for the immediate future is that international associations shall be democratic as between nations, and that those nations shall develop democratically and socialistically in themselves. Constructive socialist enterprise will exist in the international order for so long as the work of reconstituting political (and financial) boundaries goes on. In a military context the United Nations will behave like a collectivist government. But once the phase of reconstitution and military supervision is past we shall be back among the sovereignties.

Whatever limits are set to sovereignty obviously it is desirable that nations shall treat each other democratically if that is possible without violence to the interests of the whole of society. Now the whole of society is an idea hard to conceive; yet that does not entail a barren egalitarianism. It is not improbable that the aftermath of the present war will be dominated by an English speaking coalition, so powerful, in a military and economic sense, as to be able to plan the world. Doubtless the economies of the more dangerous nations will have to be revised, not without the mediation of power. This is where the difference of spirit between Communism and Capitalism becomes relevant. A world economy for the benefit of the world is Communistic. A power economy, however successful in its early stages, will fail because of the eventual impossibility of absorbing the slave mentality, and will fail because of the slave-driving mentality which it generates.

It does not follow from this, however, that backward populations or reverted populations, are immediately to be treated as equals by those who have reason to believe themselves civilized. Communism, therefore, has nothing useful to teach in the context of a problem like the post-war treatment of Germany or like the political and economical governance of India. It has no contribution to make on the desirability of Indian industrialism from the standpoint of the rest of the world. In the international order, there is a clearer difference between the developed and the undeveloped even than in the most backward of municipal orders. Communism, in so far as it teaches equality of distribution, is only part of a democracy which would raise all the individuals of the world to equal importance, equal creativity, equal political responsibility. The specific problem to be faced is the proper treatment by the progressive races, or groups, of the backward races or groups. That is a dynamic problem not soluble by a static formula. It is an empirical problem in world organization the solution of which Communism may inspire, but which only a sound empirical political wisdom can cope with and solve.

CHAPTER V.

IMPERIAL FUTURES.

THE specific problems that perplex the present rulers of the British Empire (if it has rulers) are too special for particular treatment in the general theory of Socialism. But it is worth observing that imperial problems do reflect one of the major processes of the age—the process by which orders of society are liberated and, being liberated, change society and threaten the foundations of the civilization of their emancipators.

The growth of living colonies and dependencies to maturity makes despotic exploitation more difficult than it was in the days of the navigators, just as the growth of populations in European countries makes local despotism more socially purposive, and more reliant on public approval and co-operation, than it was in feudal days. When, therefore, it has happened that the inhabitants of the colony have shared common traditions with the colonizing nation, sharing, for example, as Africa and Canada did with Great Britain, a set of common religious principles and human values, then it has come about that the imperial power has not only been forced, but, more important, has been able, to admit the colony to equal status and full responsibility.

In India, on the other hand, the British Government finds itself being forced to do what it is unable to do, trust the colonial populations with complete autonomy. This problem now presents itself in circumstances of so peculiarly historic and special a nature that they suggest, not the Boer War, but the revolt of the Carnatic in the 18th century, with the difference that what was then wealth of the Indies is now Commonwealth and a strain on our political system.

To these problems of Empire Socialist theory has little contribution to make. Theoretically it is possible for an imperial power

to be socialistic in its metropolis, while it treats part of its dominions as the proper subject matter for exploitation and autocratic government. This is the German ideal. The Russians have also recognized the practicality of the theory in their treatment of the more backward areas of Siberia. Nevertheless the spirit of Socialism looks forward to days when the only slaves that human beings employ shall be inanimate machines. Just as it was spiritually fatal for the free Greeks to rely on slave labour, so it would be debilitating to the British Empire, locally and in its metropolis, for a small white population to live at the expense of a large coloured population. It happens, moreover, that the coloured races constitute an absolute majority in the world and are achieving that minimum of education which equates depressed quantities with the world's quality. The problem, then, becomes not the problem of preventing the coloured masses from achieving power, but the quite as difficult problem of ensuring that they shall achieve what we regard as civilization in time to prevent their reduction of the world to what we consider chaos and anarchy.

In special cases, where the white civilization has been qualitatively and quantitatively dominant, coloured men have learned to live the same life as the white men, within the limits between white enlightenment and white stupidity. That is the position of the Negroes in the United States. Any problem that exists there is solved by the negro's tolerant recognition of white inferiority and his acceptance of white snobbery as part of it. In Europe the changing of modern tastes, and the averaging out of classes, is operating to remove from the white mentality any overweening consciousness of superiority over the coloured. The white man lives in metropolitan areas where East meets West; and there appears to be less difference than between East end and West end. He eats oriental spices beneath Gothic window panes, to the accompaniment of the music of Persian Markets, played to Willow Pattern Plates. He finds that his tastes are only slightly more restrained than those of the coloured man who dresses, when he can afford it, in Saville Row, unless he comes

with loin cloth from the pagoda, or the Inner Temple.

Unless the European commits himself to a doctrine of racial superiority, and an attitude of national arrogance, he knows no reason to be ashamed or afraid of participation in a social or political system which includes the representatives of those races that both the orthodox scientists and the Aryan heretics assure him are the ancestors of his own. Where, however, the white civilization is quantitatively not well expressed, and far from demonstrably superior in quality, we find no probability of solution, as it were, by saturation.

The problem for the white man in India is whether he shall give full rein to the developing self-consciousness of a coloured continent, hoping that it will eventually attach itself to the barque of Empire as the Island of the Penguins attached itself to the skiff of the missionary, or whether he shall endeavour to maintain the key positions that he holds, not in the hope of perpetual conquest, but in the belief that he can, by so doing, guide the destinies of a continent until its inhabitants achieve a white civilization and, some would add, a proper respect for the white man's assets.

The difficulty is to achieve the right degree of confidence; neither an excess of trust in a human nature which is not better than ours, nor an excessive mistrust of a human material which is not worse. Unfortunately, Socialism has come to India in a form, and found the passive soil of India congenial to a form, that makes the process to responsible democratic self-government far more difficult than it is proving in Russia. For the Indian philosophy that has absorbed Socialism is anarchistic beyond the wildest speculation of Tolstoy; and the human elements in India that have been liberated, and are demanding further liberation, are acquisitive with the acquisitiveness of freed-men, and all the freed-man's taste for usury at the expense of the less free, and are differently anarchistic in that they resent what they recognize or think to be exploitation. So that, together, the Hindu money-lender, and his saintly legal adviser, to say nothing of the hordes of bellicose Islam, seek at once a fuller independence than is enjoyed by any but the most advanced of

democracies, and, at the same time, show no inclination to found, or to participate in, the mediate stages of that process which broadens freedom down into the people.

The fault is on both sides. But little political relevance attaches to the historic fact that progress has been too slow and is now too fast. The end result is that the mystics of the world call upon a government to relinquish every vestige of control in an area of continental magnitude, in which it is probably the only force that carries any authority, or that feels any responsibility however small. In this position the Socialist can no more solve the political problem of India than he could the military problems of Europe. Economism is a formula of doubtful validity when applied to a group most of whose valuations are conventional and religious. The economistic thinkers can see those economic exploitations by investors that are going on now. They can also see the exploitation that has masqueraded as religion, though they are not very penetrating in study of the peculiar institution which is Congress. The abuses of the caste system they understand, in the relatively backward areas where it still holds significance. But the evasive theory of non-resistance, this militant Pacificism, they are inclined to accept as pure religion without inquiry into the credentials of its priesthood.

Perhaps the ultimate solution will derive from the fact that fundamentally the brown man is as mean and human as the white man. An accelerating system of communications will bring him to the recognition of the value of white government to his continent even quicker than the penetrating social ideas of the white man have brought him the consciousness of being exploited. On his side, the white man is also being taught by history that he needs the co-operation of the brown man, and not only the money of a few coloured tyrants and capitalists.

Here doctrines are dangerous. Empires owe their shape to political, military, psychological, as well as economic, developments that are not the subject matter of any predictable processes. Theories alter rather than express the course of imperial history. To-day there are psychological developments in the world which

a good Socialistic theory can incline, if not direct, to the creation of a controlled political-economic system, which is good on the assumption that the values which we hope to preserve are truly expressive of the permanent qualities of the human race and deeper than the colours of the human skin.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM WORDS TO DEEDS.

TO sum up, the conclusion must have become evident early in this essay that Communism and Socialism are not to be judged as doctrine only. In a psychological world, a world in which behaviour patterns are more significant than the patterns of thought, logic is far too unstable a material on which to build. More important than the ideal is the psychology, the system of behaviour, which the ideals, or ideologies rationalize so as to give them a specious justification. We have seen that the psychological correlate of Communism can vary from idealism to cynicism. In the graph formed from Institutions and social purposes to express the Communist State, we have seen that the vertical axis is also the axis of Fascism. If, then, there is any psychological merit to correspond to the real spirit of Communism, whatever that is, it will certainly not take the form of a self-evident derivative of the mechanism of political organization applied ruthlessly to social life.

The spirit of Communism, as it is felt by those who genuinely believe in it as a selfless idealism, is as subtle and as fragile as the spirit of Democracy which it comes to fulfil. An ideal like Communism, an ideal like Democracy (even in its narrowest sense), is something that emanates from established and accepted institutions which express that spirit. Just as there is no difference in theory between the Constitution of England and the Weimar Constitution, save that the latter was better, and just as there was all the difference in spirit between the adherents of the two two constitutions, so a theoretic Communism can be drafted, and will operate, in a state which is devoted in practice to self-seeking, whilst a less perfect schedule of ideals can inspire and be fulfilled by, the denizens of a country whose political theory leaves much to be desired.

If examples are needed to establish the proposition that kindness and generosity on a large scale are not deducible from theoretical co-ordinates, then the history of this present war constitutes a rich source. The future historian of Communism may find two outstanding facts have recorded themselves in our contemporary history. First that the high water mark of political opportunism and clever stupidity of a Capitalistic type was achieved by Communist Russia in September 1939. Second, that the first large-scale departure from the principles of property and price was achieved in the Lease Lend Act of the most Capitalistic country known to history. The moral of the story is that the spirit of nations is greater than, and smaller than, their formal institutions. Moreover, the spirit of Institutions is something much subtler, much more organic, much more destructible, and much less destructible, than its formulated manifestation in words. Deeds speak more loudly than words and they also speak more accurately. For words are an attempt to give a unilateral interpretation to facts and purposes which are inveterately ambiguous. Especially are words inadequate when they consist in abstract formula which purport to exhaust reality. In particular the theory of Communism stated as a theory of value, as a theory of history, and even as an ethical desideratum, is abstract, is unreal, is a metaphor to describe something of a spirit which, as reality, is progressively permeating Institutions, but which cannot be isolated without at the same time being extinguished.

For Communism as an intellectual construction contains no satisfactory account of the process from theory to practice. Communism has demonstrated the prevalence of an acquisitive motive in history, but has not shown convincingly how the acquisitive motive is exorcised. In consequence Marxian Determinism amounts only to an effort to prove the certainty of a miracle. That proof, by definition, is impossible. On the other hand the prior effort to reduce all history to terms of material selfishness must fail. At best it results in an elaborate construction of history harmonized by the belief that human beings

are impelled, not only to their own immediate advantage, but by the forces of history to their own future advantage in time. The sacrifice, implicit in this, of present to future good is mediated and made possible by the mysterious processes of the class war. The epicycles of this conflict are as difficult to state, in order to account for ancient and modern appearances, as the astronomical system of Ptolemy proved to be when applied over the increasing range of celestial phenomena. Hitler has played Kepler to the circles of Marxianism, and the time is ripe for Copernicus.

II.

The Profit Motive affords no escape from the Profit Motive. But we know that there are emergents, creatures of no known necessity, psychological developments in the heart of materialism which transcend it. These appear first in the lives of saints, and in the utterances of prophets, speakers who speak with the inspiration of the ideas that they see above the clash of contemporary forces. And after them come theorists, to describe the need for the recognition of these truths, and these truths themselves as they manifest themselves in experience. But there is a gap in time between the thoughts and the conduct they animate. That gap tends to diminish in the modern world. But it still exists between ideas and institutions, between deeds and words.

The history of charity, in its widest sense, of which Communism is a modernized and systematic example, bears testimony to this time-lag between ideals and behaviour, between thought and reality. We live now in a world where the old prophetic denunciations of hardship to the widow and the orphan sound singularly empty. " Thy silver has become dross, thy wine is polluted with water " sound now as antiquated strictures on bi-metallism and temperance. Yet there was a time when the prophetic denunciations were significant because they described reality.

And even now, after two and a half millennia, during which those societies have failed to survive which did not embody certain minima of charity and tolerance, even now it is clear that

the progress to the ideal has been small, even if we can be sure that it is permanent.

If then the reform of the human spirit is so slow and imperceptible that many generations are required to show any perceptible change, how much more slow is to be a progress towards an ideal which claims to be more comprehensive than any that went before. One must make all allowances for the accelerations that are due to invention, education, organization and emulation; one must also offset the increased tendency to slavishness, to mechanical imitation and the tendency to the least resistance on the largest scale. Yet, when all this has been said, it remains true that Communism has made, in modern times, a contribution to social progress (assuming that it is progress) in a convincing way. And that not by way of doctrine, but through the historically fortuitous circumstance that doctrines long-known to thinkers have eventually found a correlate in Institutions.

In theory collective effort means nothing more now than it meant when society was organized into herds under the inspiration of totems. The cynic would have us believe that modern collectivism is only the rationalization of a wide-spread reversion to primitive type. But modern society does offer something that was unknown to the herd. Modern organization is different in quality as well as in magnitude from the casual grouping which was only sufficient to preserve our nomadic ancestors from anarchy. The modern world has re-discovered the herd. It has also discovered the technique of State distribution. And it is possible that State distribution will make practicable the enjoyment by many of the kind of atmosphere which historically we know to be favourable to progress. If leisure and well-being in some degree are the essential prerequisites of intellectual and moral development, then society at large is likely to inherit opportunities which, in the past, have belonged to limited classes like the landed, commercial and ecclesiastical, aristocracies. As for our capacity, this war has shown that the world can still find itself possessed by purposes, good or evil, to inspire the mental and moral equipment of the world to creative endeavour.

But, it must be emphasized further, the Institutions, be they old-fashioned or renovated, are by themselves not enough. Institutions are public habits. Habits are efforts that have crystallized the inspiration that brought them into being. It is important that the world shall not fall into the grip of collectivist habits, just as it was bad for the world to fall, as it did, into what are loosely called Capitalistic habits. This danger can be averted by education; but not by education in any narrow sense. Education, like abstract ideas, is only real when it participates in life. In particular, political education means not the mechanical diffusion and absorption of slogans which once had a meaning, but the understanding of politics by those whom politics concerns: that means by all.

If the political defects of the last age dare be stated compendiously, it may be said that Democracy failed to achieve the mental participation of the people in government, which it is supposed to guarantee. Much more serious than any of the charges that are brought by the governed against the governors, is the charge that in this age the governed let themselves be badly governed. Worse than servants who have failed to educate their masters, are masters who allow themselves to be tyrannized over by servants. In an age of brute force and fear the servant was always the master. In an age of bronze, or silver, or paper currency, the servant need not be master, but is allowed to become so, as priests usurp power in obscurantist cults. In a higher age the roles should not be so easily reversed. But it can happen that the world remains hedonic, that people continue to live for the moment, and the servant continues to reign rather than to serve.

At the present stage of our development authoritarianism, degenerating into power, is all too easy. Industrial life and State organization are so vast that they could not function if the obedience they involve in any particular act were not absolute and prompt. Yet under that automatism, there is room for acceptance, consent, and condition. The desideratum is to combine an attitude of service with an hostility to servitude. In

any system which is calculated to organize the commonwealth of human beings men are servants and masters both. The individual values that require to be preserved require preservation in the servant and in the master ; in the servant who is part of a society of masters, in the master who is a member of a society of servants. What they must be endowed with in abundant measure, and above all else, is Responsibility to themselves and to others. The paramount defect of this age, and the obvious consequences of creating machinery too vast for any one human being to control, replace or repair, is the sense of social unimportance that has overtaken the vast majority of men, and to which the strutting of megalomaniacs is an understandable reaction, not an exception.

Concurrently, many schemes are afoot to improve mankind, conscious schemes to create a better distribution of the basic necessities, scientific efforts consciously or unconsciously calculated to produce the means to satisfy those needs more easily than before. But, apart from the accident of danger, there is no process going on now which is calculated to vest men and women with Responsibility.

As earners of wealth they continue to be limited by routine and habit. As political entities they vote blindly, and rule even more blindly. Ideals like Communism are accepted, rightly ; but without a full understanding. Ideals like Democracy are the subject-matter of lip-service, and are, like Christianity, weakening from day to day.

If the ideals of Communism were absorbed into society in reforms, rather than in doctrines, if political and economic machinery were overhauled so as to make economic production and political undertaking more conscious, more purposive, more responsible, the service of humanity would be more efficient, more honest, more practically reliable.

To this end, the acceptance of a formula is a very short step indeed, taking us a very little way on the path of improvement. Negatively, it is valuable, because it destroys certain obsessions and certain prejudices, even if it affords no guide to progress after that relative emancipation. It is also dangerous, because in

emancipating the human spirit, it leaves its prey to temptations from which hardship protected it. The prevention by each individual self of indolence, of misdirection of energy, is at least as difficult as the perception by a machine seller, of the economic dangers that he is about to create.

The solution to the problem, or the redemption of society, is not by formula. That is the limit to the value of modern Socialist or Communist doctrine. If a nation achieves a way of life which is well-grounded in its needs, yet relatively free from the basic necessities, and if, in such a nation, people retain a permanent interest in their lives and in more than their lives, then Democracy exists in a very high degree ; and the problems which are stated, and over-stated, in the metaphysic of a system like Communism, fall into place. Of the essentials of the system, some element will be found to inhere in the postulates of politics and to be beyond question. Other problems and solutions will find their ordinary place as the subject matter of every day affairs. Always there will be in society the likelihood of some future challenge to the political postulates. Some new principle will seem to be as important to the future as Communism appears now. And will be equally resisted by those too stupid, too selfish, or too wise, to accept it.

Thus it behoves nobody to say that Marx was the last of the Prophets and that anyone who prophesies after him is a false prophet. And if that limitation be valid, then there is room in thought for many valuations and beliefs which exist in, and enrich, modern politics, and are compatible with a sympathetic and critical attitude, an attitude which profits from, rather than accepts or rejects, this newest and oldest of idealistic creeds.

CHAPTER VII.

CODA TO PERSONALITY.

IN a period very conscious of oppression and with no experience of progress, no sense of futurity but the conventional idea of a better past, the philosopher Rousseau declared that "man is born free but is everywhere in chains." The men of our generation think that they were born in chains, and that everywhere they are free. From whatever circumstances limited the lives of their parents they are emancipated by education, by access to the world that science has opened, by increases of earning power, by participation in the riches of a rich commonwealth. Less confined than his predecessors to limited spaces and by conventional forms, the youth of to-day is dimly conscious of an ability to carve for himself a path through time. He feels himself to be the architect of his own fortunes, the planner of his own future, until experience of his own limitations, and the limitations of his environment, make their reality felt and, as he grows older, show themselves destined to become more real than the content of his early dreams.

Among other limitations, he will find a limitation in his own unlimited aspiration. "Me this unchartered freedom tires" expresses the feeling of a poet of unrealized romance whose messages sounding across a century have proved so urgent to this present generation. The doors of opportunity which open too easily rarely lead to happy places; and the destination is eventually recognized to be a dwelling in the confines of a habit system which intellect and will power combine to make wide and spacious, but which indolence and stupidity, which are the more ordinary characteristics of men, make ever more cloistered and narrow. So the king of infinite space finds himself bounded in a nut shell, unable to sleep.

To such a one comes ideals, as soporific or as stimulant. A spirit moving in the world so as to emancipate personality, moving over the void of human freedom so as to give it form, can widen the confines of the self and change it from that accidental self which prevents the possible from becoming actual, into that truer self which puts its own pattern on possibility and makes it real.

In recent generations the propagation of a largely conceived system of thinking, well grounded albeit generally mis-stated, has so enriched the intelligence of the general masses that people can feel that they have more to live for. Communism, by emancipating the thoughts of youth from the limits of convention, and the conduct of youth from the limits which are helplessness, elevates youth to the level of social importance which in older civilizations was reserved for age. In the new order time is the seed-field of developing personality, whereas in the old order mature personalities lorded it over space. Less importance attaches now to wisdom and caution. Incisiveness of thought, instinct, the untempered judgment of one young enough to know better than his elders, is valued because we are now more than ever conscious that effort and purpose are only real when they are potential and dynamic, are lost when they become static and settled.

But the effort of maintaining an intellectual and moral dynamic is far more strenuous, both to society and to the individual, than is the placid acceptance of guidance and routine. The rich language of progress is a language harder to speak intelligibly, and harder to understand, than are languages supported by established grammar and with a vocabulary made easy by the use of cliché. Into the unsettled language of progress the Communist system endeavours to introduce rules and fixed meanings. Its formulae are the formulae of emancipation, and, as an expression of the spirit of the age, they constitute a great enrichment of conventional thought, suggesting a larger conception of the world than was possible in narrower terms. But in that very act of formulation, in thought and conduct, progressive thinking

seems to lose its dynamic and become static. Then, mechanically operating rather than organically, it develops into a restriction upon personality and ceases to be progressive.

Perhaps intellectual failure of this type springs from ambition rather than from lack of it. The world is not susceptible to formula. We have seen that in the failure of doctrinaire art forms, and in the indifference of scientific progress to political purposes. Purely intellectual functions like the physical and mathematical sciences remain constant; and those who endeavour to show any relation between the internal progresses of scientific thinking and the spirit of the environment only achieve comical effects. At the other extreme the human valuations contain assessments which remain surd-like and externally related to social thinking. If, then, the progressive intelligence endeavours to formulate itself too ambitiously, a violence is wrought which is discordant, and renders improbable the integration of an harmonious system.

While it is dynamic Communistic thinking does, indeed, stimulate academic thought more than it was stimulated in the dilettante tradition, and gives comfort at the lower levels of thought and conduct greater than the compensations of conventional charity. But the impulse is harder to maintain. The Communist appetite is easily jaded. Enthusiasms are a function of the richness of the spiritual and material environment. When that environment is too exhaustively planned and chartered, enthusiasm gives place to routine—the Communist danger *par excellence*—the new outlook loses its freshness, and its exponents find themselves sceptical, and spiritually ready to become the creators of regiment. That is the stage at which, in politics, we hear the cry of Fascism.

II.

Fascism has been, in the mouths of many, an uncritically used term of abuse, directed to any one who flouts the opinions of the mob when the mob happens to be sentimental and harnesses the mob when it happens to be hysterical and cruel. But Fascism corresponds to something real in human experience.

It corresponds to the loss of spirituality in the individualistic order, and the substitution for it of a mechanical collectivism.

In regimentation there is an escape, as it were, from the problems of ethical thinking into life. If Communism has a higher meaning than regimentation, it must be a meaning that will satisfy ethical demands, not reject them. Historically, Communism has always been inspired by that humanitarianism which aims at emancipating human individuality, not at suppressing it. Yet it is difficult to emancipate without also suppressing. Therein lie the exquisite difficulties of freedom and democracy. These things, being real and living, are delicate. To say that liberty must be restricted, or controlled, in order to make liberty possible, is to say something true. But in that difficult formula can also be found a rationalization of oppression.

The primary problem of the individual, then, is to achieve a fullness in his own life and experience which enables him to know whether he is being liberated or being oppressed. In pursuit of that full life he is wise to let himself be carried by the tide of a thought which has flowed from a narrow individuality to a wider conception of personality. In constructing for himself a habitation in time, or a castle in the air, he must use as material that which is provided by his social environment. He cannot draw, as the men of an earlier age did, on the resources of a privately aspiring soul thriving on the incense of unworldly aspiration in a secluded shrine. But his spiritual problem is similar to that of the religious man, for he too has to develop along the lines of a spiritual craving; and he too is ignorant of his ultimate purpose. The one does not know what to do with his soul when he has lost the world; the other does not know what to do with the world when he has lost in it his individual soul.

Yet the difference is probably metaphysical rather than real. The spiritual problems that progress presents to the individual are like those difficulties of theology which mean nothing to men and women who in their daily lives are devout. There is no merit in the speculative contemplation of an empty world, like some heaven, in which there will be no occupation other than

the playing of stringed instruments. The future is too rich to be made the subject of empty antinomies. Life will continue as rich under the wider categories of a relatively unselfish individuality as it was in the older grooves of selfishness. If anything there will be more to do, and less time for unprofitable speculation. There will be an emancipation from the self-centredness of intellect which makes people dwell on their ultimate destinies, and lose thereby the richness of the life they should be living.

Nevertheless, the tastes of human beings will doubtless be different before men fully appreciate the kind of life which the new order offers them. The poet, tired by freedom because he lost himself in humanity, would have less and more difficulty these days in rediscovering himself. He would not be able to escape into mathematics from his spiritual hardship. Yet he might easily find himself animated by the duty of following whatever task he undertook as if the world depended on him.

If socialistic thinking has done anything to, or for, the spirit, it has changed the idea of adventure and the meaning of romance. The majority of those living now still remember how, in a darkening world, the last great war was hailed as the rebirth of aspiration. When out of the darkness the trumpets sounded in 1914, the youth of that day rallied to it in order to march away from boredom. Turning "from a world grown old and cold and weary," they sought in battle the re-integration of their lives and the redemption of barren years.

But in this present age the soldiers of adversity, the patient infantry of progress, are reconciled to a more pedestrian future. They are prepared to find glamour in the monotonies of peace, excitement in the laborious burrowings of the soldiers of a new type of science, so vast that the part played by each seems insignificant. Yet every part of it is adventurous to the reconciled minds of the really progressive, because they see it cosmically, as a phase in the slow turning of the human world out of the jarring spirals of past evolution into the freer phases of a larger system.